

RE-FORMING MARY IN SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY DUTCH PRINTS

BY

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Doctor of Philosophy.

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## ABSTRACT

### Re-Forming Mary in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Prints

Elissa A. Auerbach  
2009

Late sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Dutch artists portrayed the Virgin Mary in an impressively diverse and iconographically complex range of themes—particularly in the easily reproducible medium of prints. Despite the widespread belief that Marian art and devotion disappeared from the Calvinist-dominated Northern Netherlands after the Reformation, prints of Mary demonstrate that the Dutch continued to venerate her, including Roman Catholics *and* Protestants. While some Marian prints sustained conventional Catholic modes of piety, other images reinterpreted her in a secular context to accommodate the intellectual interests and devotional needs of multiconfessional audiences. The duality between the spiritual and earthly conceptions of Mary in prints echoed not only post-Reformation debates about her devotional role, but also cultural and scientific shifts in Dutch society as the Republic progressed into the modern, secular age.

Each chapter of this dissertation focuses on individual prints or print series that represent the themes and theological issues of post-Reformation Dutch Marian art. The first chapter examines Hendrick Goltzius's the *Life of the Virgin* series of 1593-94, and the appeal that Mary may have had for the artist's local Catholic and Calvinist audiences. The second chapter considers Magdalena van de Passe's print,

*Winter*, from a series of the four seasons after designs by her father, Crispijn, which portrays a secular family that is evocative of the Holy Family. The third chapter analyzes a pilgrimage print depicting the Chapel of Our Lady of Need in Heiloo and the image's bearing on the revival of Catholicism in the early seventeenth century. The fourth chapter studies Rembrandt's deviations from traditional Marian iconography in his 1639 etching, the *Death of the Virgin*, and its representation of a doctor that signifies the developments of the Scientific Revolution and Cartesianism in the Dutch Republic.



For Steve, with all my love

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I chose my dissertation topic unwittingly from a paper bag. During my second semester of graduate school in Marilyn Stokstad's Christian Iconography seminar, I was handed a bag and asked to take out one of the paper slips inside it. The slip I selected read: "the Life of Mary." My assignment was to deliver a presentation the following week on the depiction of Mary's life in art, which was both a daunting and exciting task for a student new to graduate school and to Mary. Since that day, I have been fascinated by the intersections between art, religion, and history. I am forever indebted to the many people and institutions that have enabled me to pursue my research interests since then. This is a luxury I have never taken for granted. My dissertation would not have been possible without their inspiration, support, academic training, and friendship.

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## INTRODUCTION

During the century and a half after the Reformation, the production of Marian imagery in the United Provinces flourished. Late sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Dutch artists revived the depiction of the Virgin Mary in a multitude of prints, paintings, drawings, ceramics, sculptures, and liturgical objects; thousands of the works still exist today. The substantial quantity of Marian themes in Dutch art is remarkable in light of the Protestant reformers' suppression of Roman Catholicism in the Republic. Catholicism, the only public religion in 1572—the year of the Dutch revolt under William of Orange against the Spanish Catholics—dwindled to a minority faith the following year under the Calvinist-dominated government. Beginning in 1573, the States General issued numerous edicts outlawing most forms of Catholic activity, which generated intense hostility and acts of violence by Protestants against Catholics throughout the Republic. Despite the oppressive religious climate, seventeenth-century Catholics comprised a large section of Dutch society—approximately one-third of the population by mid century—and found havens in the provinces of northern Holland, Utrecht, Overijssel, and Gelderland.<sup>1</sup> The sheer number of Marian artworks, their quality, and innovative iconographic

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<sup>1</sup> Willem Frijhoff and Marijke Spies, *1650: Hard-Won Unity*, trans. Myra Heerspink Scholz, Dutch Culture in a European Perspective (Assen and Basingstoke: Royal Van Gorcum and Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 1:352; Jonathan I. Israel, *The Dutch Republic: Its Rise, Greatness, and Fall, 1477-1806*, ed. R. J. W. Evans, Oxford History of Early Modern Europe (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 361-89; Charles H. Parker, *Faith on the Margins: Catholics and Catholicism in the Dutch Golden Age* (Cambridge, MA, and London: Harvard University Press, 2008), 17, 254 n. 54.



variety testify to the continued significance that Mary held in visual culture and religiosity during the Dutch Golden Age.

Recent, extensive studies on the effects of the Reformation on Dutch visual culture and religiosity have certainly enriched our understanding of artists, their works of Catholic themes, patronage, and the dominant confessional groups that included Roman Catholics, Calvinists, and Mennonites.<sup>2</sup> Yet little scholarly attention has been paid to the role of Mary in Dutch art from 1572—the year that Calvinists seized control of the government—to 1672—the year of the Amsterdam stock market crash that marks the decline of the Dutch economy and art production.<sup>3</sup> To begin to

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<sup>2</sup> The term “confessional groups” in Reformation scholarship refers to the Christian denominations, including Lutherans, Calvinists, and Roman Catholics, that affirmed their beliefs and distinguished themselves from one another after the Reformation through documents, such as the *Augsburg Confession* and the *Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent*. For the relationship between the process of society’s confessionalization in the early modern period and the construction of national identity, see Heinz Schilling, *Religion, Political Culture and the Emergence of Early Modern Society: Essays in German and Dutch History*, ed. Heiko A. Oberman, vol. 50, *Studies in Medieval and Reformation Thought* (Leiden, New York, and Cologne: E. J. Brill, 1992).

<sup>3</sup> For the events of 1572 and 1672, see Jonathan I. Israel, *The Dutch Republic: Its Rise, Greatness, and Fall, 1477-1806*, 169-178, 796-806. On the history of the Virgin Mary in Roman Catholic and Protestant theology, see Sally Cunneen, *In Search of Mary: The Woman and the Symbol* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1996), 185-210; Donna Spivey Ellington, *From Sacred Body to Angelic Soul: Understanding Mary in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2001); Hilda Graef, *Mary: A History of Doctrine and Devotion* (Westminster and London: Christian Classics and Sheed & Ward, 1985), 2: 7-18; Melissa R. Katz, “Regarding Mary: Women’s Lives Reflected in the Virgin’s Image,” in *Divine Mirrors: The Virgin Mary in the Visual Arts*, ed. Melissa R. Katz (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 19-123; Beth Kreitzer, *Reforming Mary: Changing Images of the Virgin Mary in Lutheran Sermons of the Sixteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); René Laurentin, *A Short Treatise on the Virgin Mary*, trans. Charles Newmann, S.M. (Washington, NJ: AMI Press, 1991), 126-34; Thomas F. O’Meara, *Mary in Protestant and Catholic Theology*

rectify this shortcoming in the scholarship, the chief question asked in this dissertation is: What was the effect of the Reformation on Marian art and devotion in the Dutch Republic, and how, and for whom, did Dutch artists represent Mary?

Some Dutch Marian works from the post-Reformation period portray Mary as a devotional figure closely associated with the theological and pictorial traditions of Roman Catholicism. A faience bottle from ca. 1700-10, for example, painted with representations of Mary, Christ, Peter, and other saints, could have functioned as a liturgical vessel used in the sacrament of the Eucharist for a Catholic church or home altar (fig. 1).<sup>4</sup> Catholics may also have been drawn to Rembrandt's etching, *The Virgin with the Instruments of the Passion* (fig. 2), ca. 1650-54, in which the veiled

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(New York: Sheed and Ward, 1966); Jaroslav Pelikan, *Mary Through the Centuries: Her Place in the History of Culture* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1996), esp. 153-63; Christine Peters, *Patterns of Piety: Women, Gender and Religion in Late Medieval and Reformation England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), esp. 208, 243; Walter Tappolet, *Das Marienlob der Reformatoren* (Tübingen: Katzmann-Verlag, 1962); Marina Warner, *Alone of All Her Sex: The Myth and the Cult of the Virgin Mary*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1976. Reprint, New York: Vintage Books, 1983. Citations in the following pages are to the Vintage Books edition. For the relationship between Christological and Marian devotion, literature, and art in the Dutch Republic, see Valerie Lind Hedquist, "The Passion of Christ in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Painting" (Ph.D. diss., University of Kansas, 1990), 99-102. For a comprehensive history of the Dutch Republic, see Israel, *The Dutch Republic: Its Rise, Greatness, and Fall, 1477-1806*. For recent studies of Marian devotion in Flanders and Germany after the Reformation, see Jeanine de Landtsheer, "Justus Lipsius's Treatises on the Holy Virgin," in *The Low Countries as a Crossroads of Religious Beliefs*, ed. Arie-Jan Gelderblom, Jan L. de Jong, and Marc van Vaeck (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2004), 65-88; Bridget Heal, *The Cult of the Virgin Mary in Early Modern Germany: Protestant and Catholic Piety, 1500-1648* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007). For an overview of the Catholic Reformation and its effect on Marian devotion, see Michael A. Mullett, *The Catholic Reformation* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999).

<sup>4</sup> As of June 2009, this text appears in a didactic label for the object on display in the Rijksmuseum.

figure of Mary as Mater Dolorosa stands before a table covered with nails, a crown of thorns, and other objects used in the trial and death of Christ.

In contrast, other seventeenth-century Dutch Marian images suggest that Protestants may also have venerated the Virgin after the Reformation. Gerard ter Borch included a representation of a Marian sculpture in his painting, *The Ratification of the Treaty of Münster, 15 May 1648* (fig. 3), 1648, of Dutch Calvinists and Spanish Catholics taking oaths in their peace agreement to end the Eighty Years' War.<sup>5</sup> Mary's figure in the scene, surrounded by the long rays of her aureole, decorates a glistening candelabrum hung from the ceiling of the room in the town hall where the peace treaty was signed. Ter Borch enlarged the size of the actual, still extant, sculpture to increase its scale relative to the rest of the room. He also neatly centered it over the mixed crowd of Dutch and Spanish representatives. The deliberate choice he made both to place Mary equidistant from either side of the crowd beneath her and to assert her presence at the historic event suggests that she continued to hold significance at this time for both Catholics *and* Protestants.<sup>6</sup>

As this dissertation will demonstrate, the sheer quantity and quality of late sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Dutch Marian imagery indicates that the Virgin

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<sup>5</sup> Two almost identical copies of this painting are in the collections of the National Gallery of Art in London, and the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam. For a discussion of the London painting, see Alison McNeil Kettering, "The Swearing of the Oath of Ratification of the Treaty of Münster, 15 May 1648," in *Gerard ter Borch*, ed. Arthur K. Wheelock (Washington, New York, New Haven, and London: National Gallery of Art and the American Federation of the Arts in association with Yale University Press, 2004), 72-74, cat. no. 13.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 72.

served as a major devotional figure in the everyday lives of Catholics and Protestants after the Reformation. Dutch artists produced more images of Mary than of any other female figure—sacred or secular—in their work.<sup>7</sup> Rembrandt, for example, portrayed Mary in at least thirty-five different themes that he rendered in hundreds of prints, paintings, and drawings. Within this astounding number of Marian images, Dutch artists depicted her most often in engravings and etchings.

Accordingly, each chapter of this dissertation focuses on a print series, single-sheet prints, or relatively mass-produced devotional, popular prints from the Dutch Golden Age as representative, roughly chronological case studies in which the figure of Mary plays an innovative and critical pictorial, iconographic, and spiritual role. I place emphasis on works produced by artists residing in the Republic between 1572 and 1672. That is, I focus on the period from the revolt of the Protestant Dutch against the Spanish Catholics that occupied their territory to the swift decline of the economy. Dutch artists produced their most compelling religious imagery during this period as the country flourished financially and culturally in its Golden Age, and as the turbulent confessionalization process subdivided Dutch society into Roman Catholic and Protestant groups. Moreover, a concentration on the religious, artistic, and scientific culture of three centers of Dutch Catholic activity will facilitate a

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<sup>7</sup> For surveys of religious imagery produced after the Council of Trent (1545-63), see John B. Knipping, *Iconography of the Counter Reformation in the Netherlands: Heaven on Earth* (Nieuwkoop and Leiden: B. de Graaf and A.W. Sijthoff, 1974); Émile Mâle, *L'Art Religieux après le Concile de Trente* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1932); Émile Mâle, *L'Art Religieux de la Fin du XVIe Siècle, du XVIIe Siècle et du XVIIIe Siècle, Etude sur l'Iconographie après le Concile de Trente* (Paris: Librairie Armand Colin, 1951).

greater awareness of the relationship of Marian images to post-Reformation culture in the Republic: the cities of Amsterdam and Haarlem that held large Catholic populations, and the small village of Heiloo in the present-day province of North Holland, which attracted a steady flow of Catholic pilgrims in the seventeenth century who traveled there to visit its Marian shrine.

This dissertation will draw attention to a substantial number of Marian images that scholars have either overlooked or analyzed in other, non-religious contexts. It also begins to correct the traditional, misguided characterization put forth by museum curators and art historians that seventeenth-century Dutch art is largely composed of secular themes. At the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam, for example, one of its main galleries exhibiting seventeenth-century Dutch paintings contains this statement in a didactic wall label:

New Genres: In the predominantly Protestant Republic the Catholic Church was no longer able to patronize the arts. The new patrons were the wealthy burghers. Paintings—designed for town houses and therefore generally smaller in size—were sold on the open market. In the absence of religious commissions, artists turned to new genres, such as landscapes and still lifes.<sup>8</sup>

This statement, together with the artworks on display demonstrate the assessment of the museum's curators that the secular subjects of seventeenth-century Dutch art are more noteworthy than its history pictures, and that the Republic's Calvinist culture dominated the production of images. Not surprisingly, there is lacking in the Rijksmuseum's galleries a representative number of figures and narratives that are religious in subject, and in particular, that portray Mary.

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<sup>8</sup> As of June 2009, this text appears on the upper part of a wall of a gallery in the Rijksmuseum.

Nineteenth-century literature on seventeenth-century Dutch art also neglects the magnitude of traditionally Christian, and specifically, Marian imagery that artists produced. Eugène Fromentin has contributed to our current perception of Dutch artists, artistic themes, and iconographic issues from the Golden Age. Fromentin summarized the shift Dutch artists made from their pre-Reformation Catholic past, writing:

The revolution which had just made the Dutch people free, rich and so ready to undertake everything, stripped them of that which everywhere else made up the vital element of the great schools. It changed the beliefs, suppressed the needs, limited the habits, laid bare the walls, abolished the representation of the old fables as well as of the Gospel, cut short the vast enterprises of mind and hand, the church pictures, the decorative pictures, the great pictures. Never did a country place its painters on the horns of so strange a dilemma, or constrain them more expressly to be original men or nothing at all.<sup>9</sup>

Although Fromentin traveled to Paris, Amsterdam, and elsewhere in order to view collections of seventeenth-century Dutch art, he concluded from his experiences that Dutch artists largely abandoned religious subjects for portraits, landscapes, still lifes, and genre scenes.<sup>10</sup>

Current surveys of Dutch art have modified Fromentin's restricted inventory to include pictures of biblical, mythological, and historical themes. Yet scholars are still inclined to describe the imagery as overwhelmingly secular, and they have paid

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<sup>9</sup> Fromentin's letters about Dutch art, written in 1875, were first published in 1913. For the edited English edition, see Eugène Fromentin, *The Masters of Past Time: Dutch and Flemish Painting from Van Eyck to Rembrandt*, ed. H. Gerson, Landmarks in Art History (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1981), 96-97.

<sup>10</sup> For Jacob Burckhardt's similarly influential, secular interpretation of Italian Renaissance art and history that he originally published in 1860 under the title *Die Kultur der Renaissance in Italien*, see Jacob Burckhardt, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*, trans. S. G. C. Middlemore, Penguin Classics (London and New York: Penguin Books, 1990).

scant attention to artworks of Mary. Seymour Slive's comprehensive survey of seventeenth-century Dutch painting, for example, features only seven Marian images, and at no place in the text does he address the issue of post-Reformation devotion to Mary or theological debates about her.<sup>11</sup>

Such a perception of Dutch art seems understandable at first. In reaction to the theological tenets of the Reformation that denounced the material devotion of saints, images, relics, and the legends that derived from the New Testament Apocrypha, Protestants severely criticized Marian art and veneration. John Calvin, in particular, vehemently branded Catholics as "papist" for placing Mary above Christ in their art and devotion. He also condemned Marian veneration as "sacrilegious" given that artists gleaned the majority of accounts of Mary's life from the New Testament Apocrypha as opposed to the canonical Gospels that Protestants upheld.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Seymour Slive, *Dutch Painting, 1600-1800* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1998).

<sup>12</sup> John Calvin and William Pringle, *Commentary on a Harmony of the Evangelists, Matthew, Mark and Luke*, trans. William Pringle (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1956-57), 1:54-55. On Calvinism, the arts, and Calvin's commentaries on the Virgin Mary, see Philip Benedict, "Calvinism as a Culture? Preliminary Remarks on Calvinism and the Visual Arts," in *Seeing Beyond the Word: Visual Arts and the Calvinist Tradition*, ed. Paul Corby Finney (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1999), 19-45; Christopher Richard Joby, *Calvinism and the Arts: A Re-assessment* (Leuven, Paris and Dudley, MA: Peeters, 2007); Ger Luijten et al., eds., *Dawn of the Golden Age. Northern Netherlandish Art, 1580-1620* (Amsterdam and Zwolle: Rijksmuseum and Waanders Uitgevers, 1993); Mia M. Mochizuki, "At Home with the Ten Commandments: Domestic Text Paintings in Seventeenth-Century Amsterdam," in *In His Milieu: Essays on Netherlandish Art in Memory of John Michael Montias*, ed. Amy Golhany, Mia M. Mochizuki, and Lisa Vergara (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2006), 285-99; James A. Shuel, "The Virgin Mary in Reformation Theology," *Canadian Journal of Theology* 6, no. 4 (1960): 275-83; Elisabeth Sommer, "Of Idols and Images. Calvin and Luther on Religious Art," *Essays in History* 29 (1985): 67-82; Ilja M. Veldman,

The Calvinist attacks on Catholics resulted in the iconoclastic riots that began in 1566, and led to the pronouncement of the Calvinist Reformed faith as the official public church of the Republic in 1572.<sup>13</sup> In the same year, the States of Holland proclaimed that the Republic would uphold “freedom of religion,” yet the next year, it forbade Catholics from publicly celebrating Mass. The States General issued fifteen ordinances from 1580 until 1582, which prohibited Catholics from holding public office, wearing liturgical vestments, going on a pilgrimage, and exhibiting other forms of so-called Catholic superstition.<sup>14</sup> More restrictions were issued in following years. Although Catholics were forced to worship in clandestine churches called *schuilkerken* (hidden churches), the Vatican attempted to overturn bans on Catholicism by restructuring most of the Northern Netherlands into the *Missio Hollandica* (Holland Mission). The leaders of the missionary organization—the apostolic vicars, priests, and secular clergy—sought to reinstate their ecclesiastical leadership in the Republic and to convert Protestants. By the 1630s, Dutch Catholics experienced a revival that became full-scale by the 1650s.<sup>15</sup> Large numbers of the Dutch population remained Catholic after the Reformation or returned to the Catholic

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"Protestantism and the Arts: Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century Netherlands," in *Seeing Beyond the Word: Visual Arts and the Calvinist Tradition*, 397-421.

<sup>13</sup> Charles H. Parker, *Faith on the Margins: Catholics and Catholicism in the Dutch Golden Age*, 6-7.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 9, 153; Willem Frijhoff, "The Function of the Miracle in a Catholic Minority," in *Embodied Belief. Ten Essays on Religious Culture in Dutch History* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2002), 112.

<sup>15</sup> Israel, *The Dutch Republic: Its Rise, Greatness, and Fall, 1477-1806*, from 169, 377-85.



Church over the course of the seventeenth century, so the production of religious themes that formed an integral part of Catholic religiosity was sustainable.<sup>16</sup>

Perhaps one of the most unanticipated consequences of the Reformation was the appropriation of Mary by Dutch Protestants into the religious fabric of their society. The staunch, conservative Calvinist preacher, Willem Sluiter, for example, dedicated his large 1681 tome of poems, hymns, and prose entirely to Mary. His book was revised numerous times into the nineteenth century.<sup>17</sup> The popularity of Sluiter's book suggests that the rich variety of Marian images produced by Dutch artists beginning in 1572 flourished as part of the Republic's complex, multiconfessional culture.

Despite the overwhelming evidence proving the popularity of Mary in post-Reformation Dutch art, scholars have only recently acknowledged the quantity and quality of imagery of this and other religious themes. The groundbreaking exhibition

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<sup>16</sup> I am thankful to Prof. Stone-Ferrier for discussing this issue with me and for bringing to my attention Charles Parker's dissertation on this topic. Seventeenth-century Dutch Catholics were mostly comprised of wealthy lay elites and the rural populace that lived throughout the seven provinces. The precise number of Catholics living in the Republic after the Reformation is uncertain because residents were not required to affiliate themselves with any religious Church. Scholars disagree as to whether Catholics were in the majority or the minority in relationship to the Calvinists, Lutherans, Mennonites, and Jews who also lived in the Republic. On Catholics as the majority, see Charles H. Parker, "The Reformation of the Community: The Diaconate and Municipal Poor Relief in Holland, 1572-1617" (Ph.D. diss., University of Minnesota, 1993), 408. See also Parker, *Faith on the Margins: Catholics and Catholicism in the Dutch Golden Age*, 159-60. Israel points out the population of Catholics in the provinces remained in the minority, however, except for those that fell back into Spanish hands. Israel, *The Dutch Republic: Its Rise, Greatness, and Fall, 1477-1806*, 379-80.

<sup>17</sup> W. [Willem Sluiter] Sluiters, *Lof der Heilige Maagt Maria, en de triompherende Christus, over sijne verrijzenis en hemel-vaert* (Amsterdam: Johannes Boekholt, 1681).

and accompanying catalogue *Gods, Saints, and Heroes* from 1980 showed audiences an astounding number and variety of extant history pictures, and demonstrated that research on religious themes was long overdue. However, the exhibition almost entirely neglected Marian imagery and theological issues.<sup>18</sup> Subsequently, some art historians, such as Margaret Deutsch Carroll, Pieter J. J. van Thiel, and Christian Tümpel have interpreted works of art within the multiconfessional context of the Dutch Republic. They have examined biblical imagery on specifically Catholic themes, such as St. Jerome, through the lens of Calvinist theological issues, suggesting that artists modified traditional Catholic subjects in order to appeal mostly to Protestant audiences.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> In his essay on religious themes in Dutch art, Christian Tümpel argues that seventeenth-century artists depicted New Testament subject more often than those from the Old Testament, although the latter offered a wider range of narratives for exploration given their popularity in the sixteenth century. He adds that the separation between Catholic and Protestant religious art must be completely blurred, stating that there was “no such thing as a Catholic biblical scene.” Christian Tümpel, “Religious History Painting,” in *Gods, Saints, and Heroes: Dutch Painting in the Age of Rembrandt*, ed. Albert Blankert (Washington, DC: National Gallery of Art, 1980), 52.

<sup>19</sup> Tümpel has acknowledged the continued popularity of Catholicism in the seventeenth-century Republic, which facilitated the production of Catholic art for the decoration of the *schuilkerken*. Margaret Deutsch Carroll, “Rembrandt as Meditational Printmaker,” *The Art Bulletin* 63, no. 4 (1981): 585-610; Pieter J. J. van Thiel, “Catholic Elements in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Painting, Apropos of a Children's Portrait by Thomas de Keyser,” *Simiolus* 20 (1990-91): 39-62; Christian Tümpel and Astrid Tümpel, *Rembrandt*, trans. Dr. Edmund Jephcott (Antwerp: Fonds Mercator, 1986), 12. See also Paul Dirkse, *Begijnen, pastoors en predikanten. Religie en kunst in de Gouden Eeuw* (Leiden: Primavera Pers, 2001); R. Meischke, “Amsterdamse kerken van de zeventiende eeuw,” *Bulletin van de koninklijke Nederlandsche Oudheidkundige Bond* 12 (1959): 85-130; Robert Schillemans, *Bijbelschilderkunst rond Rembrandt*, trans. Dr. L. A. Schwartz (Utrecht: Kwadraat, 1989); Robert Schillemans, “Schilderijen in Noordnederlandse katholieke kerken uit de eerste helft van de zeventiende eeuw,” *De zeventiende eeuw* 8 (1992): 41-52; Peter

Two art historians have recently investigated the design and decoration of churches in the Republic, including both Dutch Reformed and clandestine Roman Catholic *schuilkerken*. Mia Mochizuki's examination of the St. Bavo Church in Haarlem, which served as the city's cathedral before the iconoclastic riots of the late sixteenth century, demonstrates that artists received Calvinist commissions for elaborate text paintings of the Ten Commandments. The panels of intricate calligraphy were installed in the church in response to the debates in Calvinism surrounding the use of human figures in art of biblical narratives.<sup>20</sup> Xander van Eck explores the monumental paintings created for the hundreds of clandestine churches in the Dutch Republic, particularly those in two centers of Catholicism: Amsterdam and Utrecht.<sup>21</sup> Scholarship on minority Dutch religious groups, such as the Roman Catholics, however, still remains mostly limited to studies of Christ and male saints, or Old Testament patriarchs and matriarchs.<sup>22</sup>

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C. Sutton and Otto Naumann, *Dutch Religious Art of the Seventeenth Century* (New Haven: The Yale University Art Gallery, 1975), 3.

<sup>20</sup> Mia M. Mochizuki, *The Netherlandish Image after Iconoclasm, 1566-1672. Material Religion in the Dutch Golden Age* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008).

<sup>21</sup> Xander van Eck, *Clandestine Splendor: Paintings for the Catholic Church in the Dutch Republic* (Zwolle: Waanders Publishers, 2008). See also Xander van Eck, *Kunst, twist en devotie. Goudse katholieke schuilkerken 1572-1795* (Delft: Eburon, 1994).

<sup>22</sup> For studies of biblical figures and saints, see Yvonne Bleyerveld, "Chaste, Obedient and Devout: Biblical Women as Patterns of Female Virtue in Netherlandish and German Graphic Art, ca. 1500-1750," *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 28, no. 4 (2000-2001): 219-50; Yvonne Bleyerveld, *Hoe bedriechlijk dat die vrouwen zijn. Vrouwenlisten in de beeldende kunst in de Nederlanden circa 1350-1650* (Amsterdam: Primavera Pers, 2000); Peter van der Coelen, "Netherlandish Printmakers and The Old Testament," in *Patriarchs, Angels & Prophets. The Old Testament in Netherlandish Printmaking from Lucas van Leyden to Rembrandt*, ed. Peter van der Coelen, *Studies in Dutch Graphic Art* (Amsterdam: Museum Het

Dutch religious historians have been much more progressive in their scholarship on Catholicism in the Republic than have art historians. They have recently rejected the notion that a dominant religious group (Calvinists) totally suppressed any other minority confessional group (Catholics, Lutherans, and Jews).<sup>23</sup>

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Rembrandthuis, 1996), 8-29; Xander van Eck, "Dreaming of an eternally Catholic Utrecht during Protestant rule: Jan van Bijlert's *Holy Trinity with Sts Willibrord and Boniface*," *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 30, no. 1/2 (2008): 19-33; Catherine B. Scallen, "Rembrandt's Reformation of a Catholic Subject: The Penitent and the Repentant Saint Jerome," *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 30, no. 1 (Spring 1999): 71-88.

<sup>23</sup> For overviews of Catholicism in the Dutch Republic, see A. Th. van Deursen, *Plain Lives in a Golden Age: Popular Culture, Religion and Society in Seventeenth-Century Holland*, trans. Maarten Ultee (Cambridge, New York, Port Chester, Melbourne, and Sydney: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 235-318. This work was originally published as *Het kopergeld van de Gouden Eeuw*, 4 vols. (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1978-80). See also F. J. M Hoppenbrouwers, *Oefening in volmaaktheid: De zeventiende-eeuwse rooms-katholieke spiritualiteit in de Republiek* (The Hague: SDU Uitgevers, 1996); R. Po-Chia Hsia, *The World of Catholic Renewal, 1540-1770*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 86-88; Maarten Prak, *The Dutch Republic in the Seventeenth Century*, trans. Diane Webb (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 212-15; Alfons K.L. Thijs, "Religion and social structure: religious rituals in pre-industrial trade associations in the Low Countries," in *Craft Guilds in the Early Modern Low Countries*, ed. Maarten Prak, et al. (Hampshire and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2006), 157-73; H. van de Waal, *Drie eeuwen vaderlandsche geschied-uitbeelding, 1500-1800. Een iconologische studie* (The Hague: M. Nijhoff, 1952). For older, distinctly pro-Catholic histories of Catholicism, in general, and Marianism, in particular in the Dutch Republic, and the ways in which Dutch Marianists separated from the post-Tridentine Catholic Church, see J. A. F. Kronenburg, *Maria's Heerlijkheid in Nederland. Geschiedkundige schets van de Vereering der H. Maagd in ons Vaderland, van de broegste tijden tot op onze dagen*, vol. 7 (Amsterdam: F. H. J. Bekker, 1904-31); L. J. Rogier, *Geschiedenis van het Katholicisme in Noord-Nederland in de 16e en de 17e eeuw*, vol. 2 (Amsterdam: Urbi et Orbi, 1947-48). For Catholicism in Amsterdam, see H. C. de Wolf, *De kerk in het Maagdenhuis* (Utrecht and Antwerp: Het Spectrum, 1970). On pilgrimage practices in the seventeenth-century Republic, see Willem Frijhoff, "Bedevaart, heiligheid, sacraliteit: op weg naar een nieuw historisch onderzoeksprogramma," in *Devotioneel ritueel. Heiligen en wonderen, bedevaarten en pelgrimages in verleden en heden*, ed. Paul Post and Louis van Tongeren (Kampen: Gooi & Sticht, 2001), 183-202; Peter Jan Margry and Charles Caspers, eds., *Bedevaartplaatsen in Nederland*.

Arguing that a multiplicity of religious groups actively participated in the Republic's religious and social climate, these scholars demonstrate that minority groups could express themselves openly in lively public debates, through published books and pamphlets, and in visual culture.<sup>24</sup> Other historians, including Jonathan Israel, Christine Kooi, and Joke Spaans, argue that religious groups in the Dutch Republic, while divided, operated with a much greater level of toleration and sociability than was previously recognized.<sup>25</sup> This new interpretation of religiosity in the seventeenth-century Republic suggests that the Dutch witnessed an extraordinary blending of as well as separation in what Willem Frijhoff characterizes as "interconfessional conviviality."<sup>26</sup>

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*Noord- en Midden-Nederland*, vol. 1 (Amsterdam and Hilversum: P. J. Meertens-Instituut and Verloren, 1997); Marc Wingens, *Over de grens. De bedevaart van katholieke Nederlanders in de zeventiende en achttiende eeuw* (Nijmegen: SUN, 1994). For the *kloppen*, spiritual Catholic laywomen, in the Republic, see Marit E. Monteiro, *Geestelijke maagden. Leven tussen klooster en wereld in Noord-Nederland gedurende de zeventiende eeuw* (Hilversum: Verloren, 1996).

<sup>24</sup> Ronnie Po-Chia Hsia and Henk van Nierop, eds., *Calvinism and Religious Toleration in the Dutch Golden Age* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

<sup>25</sup> Jonathan I. Israel, "Toleration in Seventeenth-Century Dutch and English Thought," in *The Exchange of Ideas: Religion, Scholarship and Art in Anglo-Dutch Relations in the Seventeenth Century*, ed. Simon Groenveld and Michael Wintle, *Britain and the Netherlands* (Zutphen: Walburg Instituut, 1994), 13-30; Christine Kooi, "Katholieken en tolerantie en Gouden Eeuw," *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandse Kerkgeschiedenis* 2 (1999): 112-17; Christine Kooi, "Paying Off the Sheriff: Strategies of Catholic Toleration in Golden Age Holland," in *Calvinism and Religious Toleration in the Dutch Golden Age*, 87-101; Christine Kooi, *Liberty and Religion: Church and State in Leiden's Reformation, 1572-1620* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2000); Christine Kooi, "Popish Impudence: The Perseverance of the Roman Catholic Faithful in Calvinist Holland, 1572-1620," *Sixteenth Century Journal* 26 (Spring 1995): 75-85; Israel, *The Dutch Republic: Its Rise, Greatness, and Fall, 1477-1806*.

<sup>26</sup> Willem Frijhoff, "The Threshold of Toleration: Interconfessional Conviviality in Holland during the Early Modern Period," in *Embodied Belief. Ten Essays on Religious Culture in Dutch History*, 39-65. On the multiconfessional culture

On the other hand, Andrew Pettegree and, more recently, Charles Parker, have shown that while Catholicism was reorganized and strengthened after iconoclasm in the Republic, Calvinists continually threatened and violently attacked Catholics. Thus, Pettegree and Parker have systematically dismantled the traditional perception of the Dutch Republic as a nation that promoted religious tolerance within its borders.<sup>27</sup> Their scholarship has underscored the complexity of religious issues in the post-Reformation period that are elicited from historical documents, including works of art. Despite the new arguments asserted by historians of Dutch religion, however, little attention has been paid to Marian theology, and to Mary's followers and critics.

The plethora of Marian images, together with gaps in the historiography of Dutch Catholicism and Catholic art, are the catalyst for this dissertation. Inspired by David Freedberg's pioneering work on the sixteenth-century iconoclastic riots that swept through northern Europe and the impact they had on religious art for Catholic and Protestant audiences, this study of images of Mary examines how they serve as an exceptional measure of the changes that took place in post-Reformation art and devotion.<sup>28</sup> The debates that surrounded her in seventeenth-century Protestant circles,

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of the Dutch Republic, see also Joke Spaans, "Violent Dreams, Peaceful Coexistence: On the Absence of Religious Violence in the Dutch Republic," *De zeventiende eeuw* 18, no. 2 (2002): 144-66.

<sup>27</sup> Parker, *Faith on the Margins: Catholics and Catholicism in the Dutch Golden Age*; Andrew Pettegree, "The Politics of Toleration in the Free Netherlands, 1572-1620," in *Tolerance and Intolerance in the European Reformation*, ed. Ole Peter Grell and Bob Scribner (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 182-98.

<sup>28</sup> David Freedberg, "Iconoclasm and Painting in the Revolt of the Netherlands, 1566-1609" (Ph.D. diss., Oxford University, 1972). For the published version, see David Freedberg, *Iconoclasm and Painting in the Revolt of the*

and her continued appropriation by both Catholic *and* Calvinist audiences in the Dutch Republic, will emerge from the study of her depiction in this dissertation.

Prints provide the ideal medium to analyze Dutch depictions of Mary in the early modern period not only because of their sheer quantity, but also because of their rich variety of iconographic themes.<sup>29</sup> Through prints the fullest expression of artistic license could be granted. Because prints appealed to broad, eclectic types of viewers, the images, in turn, reveal valuable information about their collectors and religiosity. The easy reproducibility and widespread dissemination of prints generated audiences that were large and simultaneously private, due to the small, usually hand-held size of

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*Netherlands, 1566-1609* (New York and London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1988). For the Reformation's effect on northern European art and culture, see also Andrew Pettegree, Alastair Duke, and Gillian Lewis, *Calvinism in Europe, 1540-1620* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); Carlos M. N. Eire, *War Against the Idols: The Reformation of Worship from Erasmus to Calvin* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986); David Freedberg, *The Power of Images: Studies in the History and Theory of Response* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1989); Craig Harbison, *Symbols in Transformation: Iconographic Themes at the Time of the Reformation* (Princeton: Art Museum, Princeton University, 1969); Hsia, *The World of Catholic Renewal, 1540-1770*; Hsia and Nierop, eds., *Calvinism and Religious Toleration in the Dutch Golden Age*; Joseph Leo Koerner, *The Reformation of the Image* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004); Sergiusz Michalski, *The Reformation and the Visual Arts: The Protestant Image Question in Western and Eastern Europe* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993); Keith P. F. Moxey, *Peasants, Warriors and Wives: Popular Imagery in the Reformation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989); Simon Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches: An Interpretation of Dutch Culture in the Golden Age* (New York: Vintage Books, 1987).

<sup>29</sup> For a discussion of prints as a means for artists to explore themes that would not otherwise be possible to represent in paintings, see Volker Manuth, "Denomination and Iconography: The Choice of Subject Matter in the Biblical Painting of the Rembrandt Circle," *Simiolus* 22 (1993-94): 244. For the themes and issues related to Catholic subjects in seventeenth-century Dutch prints, see the exhibition catalogue Jan van der Waals, *Prenten in de Gouden Eeuw. Van Kunst tot kastpapier* (Rotterdam: Museum Boijmans van Beuningen, 2006), 92-98.

the sheets or books they illustrated, which necessitated that they be viewed intimately. The opportunity afforded by the size of prints for innovative, polemical, satirical, and experimental compositions allowed artists greater flexibility in works on paper than they would have with paintings or similarly large, publicly viewed art objects.

Printed images of Mary by seventeenth-century Dutch artists represent no exception. In contrast to Marian prints, Adriaen van der Werff's *Flight into Egypt* (fig. 4), 1710, is an example of the limited range of subjects that remained popular in paintings of Mary throughout the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Dutch paintings from the period, as in Van der Werff's work, typically depict Mary in scenes of the Nativity and Holy Family, which would be acceptable to Calvinists. Artists of prints, however, as this dissertation will show, explored a broader range of themes that appealed to Catholic audiences as well.

In the remarkably diverse and iconographically complex print projects examined in this dissertation, Dutch artists portrayed Mary in ways that reinterpreted her in the context of contemporaneous Dutch domestic settings. Marian images also capture and reflect the transformative shifts in medicine, philosophy, and the development of the Scientific Revolution. As scholars of Dutch history have recently posited, the birth of the Enlightenment and modernity did not originate in eighteenth-century France or England, but around the year 1650 in the Republic.<sup>30</sup> The lively exchange of political and intellectual discourse, prompted by the new philosophy of

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<sup>30</sup> Willem Frijhoff and Marijke Spies, *1650: Hard-Won Unity*; Jonathan I. Israel, *Radical Enlightenment: Philosophy and the Making of Modernity, 1650-1750* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001); Maarten Prak, *The Dutch Republic in the Seventeenth Century*.



Cartesianism, cultivated a nascent Enlightenment culture and ushered modernity into the Republic prior to it spreading to neighboring European countries.

Amidst this major intellectual and cultural shift in Dutch society, artists reproduced images of Mary in innumerable objects. Through their innovative depictions she embodied both the pre-modern Christian view of the world and the inherent conflicts in modernity between tradition and progress. As this dissertation will attempt to show, the depiction of Mary in prints mediated the interests of Dutch Catholics, Protestants, and intellectuals—all of whom participated in the broad religious, scientific, and philosophic cultural currents after the Reformation.

Chapter one studies one of the most significant Marian projects produced in the decades following the iconoclastic riot of 1578 in the predominantly Catholic city of Haarlem. Hendrick Goltzius's exquisite series of six, single-sheet engravings, the *Life of the Virgin*, 1593-94, provides an exegetical account of Mary's life as it is narrated in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. By considering Goltzius's series within the context of print cycles of the Virgin's life by other sixteenth-century Netherlandish and German artists, and the manifestation of Mary in the city's St. Bavo Church that Calvinists exclusively used for their services, the appeal of the saint to Catholic and Calvinist audiences will be examined.

Chapter two further penetrates the potential market of Calvinists for Marian images within the context of Holy Family scenes, which conceive of her as a prototypical Dutch Everywoman. The chapter focuses on the engraving, *Winter*, by Magdalena van de Passe after a preliminary drawing by her father, Crispijn van de

Passe, which she produced in Utrecht during her residence there between 1612 and her death in 1638. Although the print is part of a cycle on the four seasons, its portrayal of a mother with her infant surrounded by an old man and small boy evokes a secularized depiction of the Holy Family with the young John the Baptist. The iconography of the print anticipates the numerous works by later seventeenth-century Dutch artists of the Holy Family as well as entirely secular family scenes of mothers holding infants that would have been appreciated by a wide audience of Catholics and Protestants. The innovative suggestion of the secularized Holy Family in Van de Passe's print arguably could have facilitated the success of Marian treatises for Calvinist parishioners, such as the devotional guide by Willem Sluiter. Thus, the mother in Van de Passe's *Winter* could have been interpreted as a Dutch Everywoman—a vehicle through which Dutch artists assimilated the Virgin for post-Reformation multiconfessional audiences.

Chapter three analyzes the phenomenon of the revival of Catholicism in the 1630s Republic through the lens of an etching that depicts pilgrims processing around the ruins of the fifteenth-century church, *Onze Lieve Vrouwe ter Nood* (Our Lady of Need), in the north Holland village of Heiloo. Embedded in a crevice of the stone ruins in the print is an apparition of the Virgin with the Christ child in the iconography of the Immaculate Conception.<sup>31</sup> The etching, executed sometime between 1637 and 1700, and republished by Frederick de Wit, attests to the fact that a

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<sup>31</sup> The theme of the Immaculate Conception was also popular in Spanish painting from the 1610s through the 1660s, especially in works produced by the artists Bartolomé Esteban Murillo, Diego Velázquez, and Francisco Zurbarán.

substantial number of Dutch Catholic patrons encouraged the production of specifically Catholic themes in art. This chapter will survey the numerous extant paintings and prints of the Heiloo pilgrimage shrine as well as the small devotional prints of Mary for pilgrims that circulated in the Dutch Republic as examples of visual culture that contributed to Catholicism's revival.

Chapter four investigates Rembrandt's large-scale and highly finished etching and drypoint, the *Death of the Virgin*, 1639. The artist's manipulation of traditional iconographic tropes for this popular pre-Reformation Roman Catholic artistic theme foreshadows aspects of the development of modernity in the Dutch Republic. In this scene, Rembrandt re-interpreted as Cartesian dualism the Christian concept of the duality of body and soul at death, which is integral to the theological meaning of Mary's Dormition and Assumption. Mary's faint representation, diminishing the physical presence of her body, and the conspicuous inclusion of a contemporary Dutch doctor at her bedside, evoked the philosophy of Cartesian dualism and the rationalist approach to science of the Scientific Revolution that had emerged in the years prior to Rembrandt's print.

The examination of disparate Marian themes in each chapter of this dissertation, including the life and death of Mary, Catholic pilgrimage, and the Holy Family, will illuminate the Dutch artistic response to the Protestant Reformers' objections to Marian art and devotion. The iconographic issues embodied in the prints discussed in this dissertation also exemplify the complexity and range of

multiconfessional as well as secular, scientific audiences in the post-Reformation Dutch Republic for whom the prints would have appealed.

## CHAPTER ONE

### Hendrick Goltzius's the *Life of the Virgin*, 1593-94: Marian Piety for a Multiconfessional Audience

On May 29, 1578, Protestant soldiers entered Haarlem's St. Bavo Cathedral during the holy feast-day celebration of *Corpus Christi* where they incited a scene of complete bedlam.<sup>32</sup> Brandishing swords and shouting at worshippers, the soldiers killed a priest and plundered the church, thus bringing a decisive end to the Catholic ownership of the cathedral. Throughout the summer, Calvinists removed the works of art and liturgical objects that were most offensive to them, and in September the Reformed Church officially reconsecrated the building as the *Grote Kerk* (Great Church). Three years later, in 1581, the Calvinist government of Haarlem in the newly independent Dutch Republic outlawed Catholicism.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> For a vivid account of the iconoclastic riot at the St. Bavo Cathedral, which is referred to as *Haarlemsche Noon* (Haarlem Noon), see Mochizuki, *The Netherlandish Image after Iconoclasm, 1566-1672. Material Religion in the Dutch Golden Age*, 105-21. See also Samuel Ampzing, *Beschryvinge ende lof der stad Haerlem in Holland* (Haarlem: Adriaen Rooman, 1628), 463-64. On the history of Haarlem from its religious and political transition to Calvinism during the period known as the Alteration (1577-78) to the first decades of the seventeenth century, see Joke Spaans, *Haarlem na de Reformatie. Stedelijke cultuur en kerkelijk leven, 1577-1620*, vol. 11, *Hollandse historische reeks* (The Hague: Stichting Hollandse Historische Reeks, 1989).

<sup>33</sup> The St. Bavo Cathedral, or *Sint-Bavokerk* (Church of St. Bavo), was renamed the Great Church after its transition from Catholic to Calvinist use. Today, the church is formally called *De Grote of St. Bavokerk* (Great or St. Bavo Church). In the following pages of this dissertation, I will refer to the building as the St. Bavo Church. On its dedication for Calvinist worship, the subsequent removal of numerous paintings, sculpture, liturgical objects, and vestments, and its redecoration with text paintings of the Ten Commandments and other suitable works for a Protestant setting, see Truus van Bueren, *Tot lof van Haarlem. Het beleid van de stad Haarlem ten aanzien van de kunstwerken uit geconfisqueerde geestelijke instellingen* (Hilversum:

Hendrick Goltzius, who immigrated to Haarlem in 1577, must have witnessed the pivotal events of the following year that began with the May 29 attack at the St. Bavo Cathedral and evolved into the dramatic reorganization of religious life that profoundly affected the city's Catholics and Protestants alike. Goltzius, who may have been Catholic, came to Haarlem to work under the artist Dirck Volkertsz Coornhert, a Catholic sympathizer who fought to defend the city's churches from iconoclasts. Coornhert was a staunch advocate of religious tolerance.<sup>34</sup> Twelve years after Goltzius moved to Haarlem, and perhaps inspired by his personal experiences, he produced one of his most enterprising projects on a theme that revived the memory of Haarlem's Catholic past for the city's residents. In a series of six engravings that comprise the cycle, the *Life of the Virgin*, 1593-94, Goltzius created a sympathetic

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Verloren, 1993); Mochizuki, "At Home with the Ten Commandments: Domestic Text Paintings in Seventeenth-Century Amsterdam," 285-99; Mochizuki, *The Netherlandish Image after Iconoclasm, 1566-1672. Material Religion in the Dutch Golden Age*; Mia M. Mochizuki, "The Reformation of Devotional Art and the Great Church in Haarlem" (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 2001); Mia M. Mochizuki, "Supplanting the Devotional Image after Netherlandish Iconoclasm," in *Negating the Image: Case Studies in Iconoclasm*, ed. Anne L. McClanan and Jeffrey Johnson (Aldershot, Hants, England and Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2005), 137-62. For the function of religious art in the St. Bavo Church and Haarlem's Commandery of Sint Jan after the Calvinists assumed control of Haarlem, see Henry Luttikhuisen, "The Art of Devotion in Haarlem Before and After the Introduction of Calvinism," in *Worship in Medieval and Early Modern Europe: Change and Continuity in Religious Practice*, ed. Karin Maag and John D. Witvliet (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2004), 281-99. On the prohibition of Catholicism in Haarlem, see Israel, *The Dutch Republic: Its Rise, Greatness, and Fall, 1477-1806*, 363-64; Pettegree, "The Politics of Toleration in the Free Netherlands, 1572-1620," 185; Rogier, *Geschiedenis van het Katholicisme in Noord-Nederland in de 16e en de 17e eeuw*, 351.

<sup>34</sup> On Coornhert's role Dutch history during the revolt against Spain, see Israel, *The Dutch Republic: Its Rise, Greatness, and Fall, 1477-1806*, 97-99, 371-73, 500-3, 566-68.

and touching portrayal of the popular pre-Reformation devotional exemplar, the Virgin Mary.<sup>35</sup>

The title for Goltzius's series, the *Life of the Virgin*, furnished by modern scholars, suits the print cycle given its primary focus on Mary. The large, single-sheet prints narrate the dramatic episodes of Mary's early motherhood as chronicled in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. These books provide the most detailed accounts of her

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<sup>35</sup> Scholars refer to the series with a variety of titles, including, in the English language, *The Early Life of the Virgin*, in German, *Meisterstiche* (Masterpieces), or the Dutch equivalents, *Meesterstukjes* (Little Masterpieces), and *Meesterstukken* (Masterpieces). Karel van Mander discusses Goltzius's biography and the series under discussion extensively in his chapter, "T'leven van Hendricus Goltzius, uytnemende Schilder, Plaetsnijder, en Glaesschrijver, van Mulbracht." See Karel van Mander and Hessel Miedema, *The Lives of the Illustrious Netherlandish and German Painters, from the first edition of the "Schilder-boeck" (1603-1604). Preceded by The Lineage, Circumstances and Place of Birth, Life and Works of Karel van Mander, Painter and Poet and likewise his Death and Burial, from the second edition of the "Schilder-boeck" (1616-1618)*, trans. Michael Hoyle, Jacqueline Pennial-Boer, and Charles Ford (Doornspijk: Davaco, 1994), 1:281v-287r. For the catalogues and general overviews of the series, see Peter van der Coelen, *Rembrandts passie. Het Nieuwe Testament in de Nederlandse prentkunst van de zestiende en zeventiende eeuw* (Rotterdam: Museum Boijmans van Beuningen, 2006), 50-55, cat. nos. 1a-1f; Jan Piet Filedt Kok, "Hendrick Goltzius—Engraver, Designer, and Publisher, 1582-1600," *Goltzius Studies: Hendrick Goltzius (1558-1617). Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 42-43 (1991-92): 183, 213-14, cat. no. 104; Otto Hirschmann, *Verzeichnis des graphischen Werks von Hendrick Goltzius 1558-1617*, 2nd ed., Meister de Graphik (Brunswick: Klinkhardt & Biermann, 1976), 6-12; Huigen Leeftang and Ger Luijten, *Hendrick Goltzius (1558-1617): Drawings, Prints and Paintings* (Zwolle, Amsterdam, New York, and Toledo: Waanders Publishers, Rijksmuseum, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, and The Toledo Museum of Art, 2003), 19, 203, 205-8, 210-15, cat. no. 75; Luijten et al., eds., *Dawn of the Golden Age. Northern Netherlandish Art, 1580-1620*, 362-66, cat. no. 25; Walter S. Melion, "Piety and Pictorial Manner in Hendrick Goltzius's Early *Life of the Virgin*," in *Hendrick Goltzius and the Classical Tradition*, ed. Glenn Harcourt (Los Angeles: University of Southern California; Fisher Gallery, 1992), 44-51; Walter L. Strauss, *Hendrick Goltzius, 1558-1617: The Complete Engravings and Woodcuts* (New York: Abaris Books, 1977), 2:574-87, 580-87, cat. nos. 317-22; The University of Connecticut Museum of Art, *Hendrik Goltzius and the Printmakers of Haarlem* (Storrs: The University of Connecticut, 1972), 27-30.

life from among the four canonical Gospels in the New Testament.<sup>36</sup> Goltzius's scenes include: the *Annunciation* (fig. 5), *Visitation* (fig. 6), *Adoration of the Shepherds* (fig. 7), *Adoration of the Magi* (fig. 8), *Circumcision* (fig. 9), and *Holy Family with John the Baptist as a Child* (fig. 10).<sup>37</sup> The Marian title for these prints may at first seem inappropriate because the six narratives he selected all traditionally appear in series of the life of Christ, not the life of Mary. For example, Giotto appropriated episodes from Mary's motherhood for his cycle on the life of Christ in frescoes that date from 1304-6 in Padua's Cappella Scrovengi. Yet, unlike Giotto's frescoes, Goltzius's print sequence excludes events from Christ's life in which Mary does not play a significant pictorial or theological role. Goltzius's deliberate concentration on the Virgin's life underscores his series' primary, Marian theme. In turn, the Marian iconography of his cycle raises questions about the appeal that the Virgin may have had for his audience.

Goltzius produced the *Life of the Virgin* series in 1591 after a yearlong journey through the Germanic states and Italy.<sup>38</sup> While in Munich, he visited Jan

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<sup>36</sup> For a description of the passages in the four Gospels that mention Mary, see Marina Warner, *Alone of All Her Sex: The Myth and the Cult of the Virgin Mary* (New York: Vintage Books, 1983; reprint, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1976), 3-24.

<sup>37</sup> The prints are substantial in size: the *Annunciation* (47 x 35.1 cm), *Visitation* (47.2 x 35.2 cm), *Adoration of the Shepherds* (47.5 x 35.3 cm), *Adoration of the Magi* (47.1 x 35 cm), *Circumcision* (47.6 x 35.2 cm), and *Holy Family with John the Baptist as a Child* (47.6 x 35.2 cm). Adam Bartsch, *Le peintre graveur* (Vienna: J. V. Degen, 1803-21), 3:nos. 15-20; F. W. H. Hollstein, *Dutch and Flemish Etchings, Engravings, and Woodcuts, ca. 1450-1700*, (Amsterdam: M. Hertzberger, 1949-), 8:5, nos. 9-14.

<sup>38</sup> According to Van Mander, Goltzius visited Venice, Bologna, and Florence before arriving in Rome on January 10, 1591. He also traveled to Naples. He returned



Sadeler, the Flemish court engraver to Duke Wilhelm V (1579-98); in Italy, he sketched antiquities and Renaissance collections in Rome and elsewhere. Scholars have described in detail the ways in which each engraving in the *Life of the Virgin* presents a superb example of Goltzius's engraving technique inspired by the ancient, Italian, and Netherlandish artwork he studied during the course of his trip. As this chapter will explore, however, the prints must also be understood as unequivocal displays of Marian piety.

Goltzius dedicated the series to Duke Wilhelm V, an ardent Marianist and patron of Roman Catholic arts. On its opening page, the *Annunciation*, the inscription reads: "To the exalted Prince and August Lord, the lord William V, Count Palatine and Duke of the two Bavarias, etc."<sup>39</sup> Didactic Latin inscriptions beneath each image,

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home from Rome on August 3, 1591. En route to Italy, Goltzius visited one of his chief artistic rivals, Jan Sadeler, in Munich. Van Mander recounts that Goltzius pretended to be a Dutch cheese merchant in order to encourage Sadeler to share his opinions of Goltzius's prints in an open and honest manner. Van Mander and Miedema, *The Lives of the Illustrious Netherlandish and German Painters, from the first edition of the "Schilder-boeck" (1603-1604)*, 1:283r, 284r-285v. In a letter dated May 24, 1591 to Justus Lipsius, Domenicus Lampsonius lambasted Goltzius for the prank he played on Sadeler and for leaving a derisive letter about him at an inn after their visit. Lawrence W. Nichols, "Hendrick Goltzius—Documents and Printed Literature Concerning his Life," *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 42-43 (1991-92): 82. See also Huigen Leeftang and Ger Luijten, *Hendrick Goltzius (1558-1617): Drawings, Prints and Paintings*, 18-19; Walter S. Melion, "Karel van Mander's 'Life of Goltzius': Defining the Paradigm of Protean Virtuosity in Haarlem around 1600," *Studies in the History of Art* 27 (1989): 118.

<sup>39</sup> "Serenissimo Principi ac illuistrissimo domino, D. Guilielmo. V. Comiti Palatiae Rhenanae Utriusque Bavariae Duci. etc." Leeftang and Luijten, *Hendrick Goltzius (1558-1617): Drawings, Prints and Paintings*, 210, 335, cat. no. 75.1. Wilhelm honored Goltzius for his series with a gold medal, chain, and a portrait medallion of himself. Van Mander and Miedema, *The Lives of the Illustrious Netherlandish and German Painters, from the first edition of the "Schilder-boeck" (1603-1604)*, 1:285r. On Wilhelm's gifts to Goltzius, see also Walter S. Melion,

provided by the Catholic poet Franco Estius, and Cornelis Schonaeus, the Catholic rector of the Latin school in Haarlem, underscore the magnitude of Mary's role in Christ's incarnation.<sup>40</sup> In appreciation of Wilhelm's Catholic faith, the subject matter of the images and their pious inscriptions faithfully narrate the accounts of Mary's life. The symbiosis of Goltzius's pious imagery and the eloquently composed, impassioned inscriptions convey a deep and abiding reverence to Mary. Scholars have focused almost entirely on the *Life of the Virgin* as a demonstration of Goltzius's

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"*Cordis circumcisio in spiritu*: Imitation and the Wounded Christ in Hendrick Goltzius's *Circumcision* of 1594," *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 52 (2001): 70 n. 11. Wilhelm V was a devout follower of the Virgin Mary. He pursued projects that transformed the city of Munich, Bavaria's capital, into the Germanic center of the Counter Reformation. His patronage of the Catholic arts attracted numerous artists to work at his court, including Jan Sadeler whose service to Wilhelm began in 1588 and lasted until 1595 or 1596. For Sadeler's tenure at Wilhelm's court, see the previously cited note from Melion. Wilhelm also founded the Jesuit church, St. Michael, and its college in Augsburg as a means to help foster the tenets of Tridentine doctrine in Bavaria. He joined the Marian brotherhood, "Altötting Madonna," and in 1581 he dedicated the city of Munich to the worship of the black Madonna at the Marian shrine in the Bavarian city of Altötting. Heal, *The Cult of the Virgin Mary in Early Modern Germany: Protestant and Catholic Piety, 1500-1648*, 189-90.

<sup>40</sup> Schonaeus (1541-1611) served as the school's rector from around 1574 or 1577 until he retired in 1609. He provided Goltzius with Latin inscriptions for his prints from 1584 until his death; Estius worked with Goltzius for a shorter period of time from 1586 until 1593. Leeftang and Luijten, *Hendrick Goltzius (1558-1617): Drawings, Prints and Paintings*, 308 n. 22. On Schonaeus, see Julie L. McGee, *Cornelis Corneliszoon van Haarlem (1562-1638). Patrons, Friends and Dutch Humanists*, Bibliotheca humanistica & reformatonica (Nieuwkoop: De Graaf Publishers, 1991), 48:300-19; Hans van de Venne, *Cornelius Schonaeus Goudanus (1540-1611). Leven en werk van de Christelijke Terentius (Nieuwe bijdragen tot de geschiedenis van de Latijnse Scholen van Gouda, 's Gravenhage en Haarlem)*, vol. 1 (Voorthuizen: Florivallis, 2001). For the concept that prints with Latin inscriptions evoke a sense of *gravitas*, see Larry Silver, "Imitation and Emulation: Goltzius as Evolutionary Reproductive Engraver," in *Graven Images: The Rise of Professional Printmakers in Antwerp and Haarlem, 1540-1640*, ed. Timothy Riggs and Larry Silver (Evanston, IL: Mary and Leigh Block Gallery, Northwestern University, 1993), 77.

mastery of printmaking, but it will be shown here that the prints manifest the fundamental tenets of post-Reformation Catholic *and* Protestant doctrines.

Despite Haarlem's Catholic majority and the high degree of tolerance accorded to Catholics in the Republic, most Dutch artists after the Reformation largely abandoned traditional representations of Mary because of controversies surrounding her in Calvinist theology. Many artists abandoned Mary and turned to Christological and Hebraic themes. John Calvin had harshly condemned Roman Catholics as "papist," "absurd," and "sacrilegious" for their preoccupation with Mary. Although Calvin upheld Mary's perpetual virginity and her critical role in the incarnation, he disparaged Catholics for awarding Mary unwarranted titles and miraculous powers. He wrote: "Nay more, to such a pitch of insolence and fury have they been hurried by Satan, that they give her authority over Christ."<sup>41</sup>

Yet, Calvin's reluctance to disavow Mary in worship or art enabled artists to use her as a profitable subject for their work, although not in traditional Catholic contexts. Artists accommodated the Christological emphasis of Calvin's teachings and his warnings about excessive Marian veneration by refashioning her as the humble, earthly Mother of God.<sup>42</sup> Goltzius consciously adapted his *Life of the Virgin* series for both Catholics and Protestants through his selection of events from her life

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<sup>41</sup> Calvin and Pringle, *Commentary on a Harmony of the Evangelists, Matthew, Mark and Luke*, 54-55.

<sup>42</sup> Hilda Graef, *Mary: A History of Doctrine and Devotion*, 2:11-13; Jaroslav Pelikan, *Mary Through the Centuries: Her Place in the History of Culture* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1996), 156-67.

as told in the canonical Gospels and by emphasizing her spiritual *and* physical, humble nature.

This emphasis on Mary's obedient and maternal role in Christ's life not only agreed with Calvin's doctrines, but also with those established by the Council of Trent (1545-63). In post-Tridentine theology, as Donna Spivey Ellington has discussed in her insightful analysis of Marian sermons from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Catholic Church promoted Mary as a quiet, virtuous, and contemplative role model.<sup>43</sup> Although the Church responded to Protestant attacks against Mary by deemphasizing the definitions of her that were derived from the apocryphal legends of the New Testament, it still asserted her validity as a sacred intercessor and encouraged her devotion through imagery, text, relics, and pilgrimage. The Jesuit leader Robert Bellarmine, for example, epitomized the Church's post-Tridentine stance on Mary, writing: "There were many patriarchs, many prophets, many kings, many apostles, many martyrs, many virgins; but only Mary was mother, virgin, and Mother of God, this was her privilege alone."<sup>44</sup> The mutual acceptance of Mary's virtuous, humble motherhood of Christ by Catholics *and* Protestants after the Reformation enabled artists to appropriate her as a moral exemplar in visual art. Thus, Goltzius's deliberate choice to portray the events of Mary's life as they are described

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<sup>43</sup> Donna Spivey Ellington, *From Sacred Body to Angelic Soul: Understanding Mary in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, passim, esp. 142-87.

<sup>44</sup> "Multi enim patriarchae, multi prophetae, multi reges, multi apostoli, multi martyres, multae virgines fuerint: at mater, et virgo et Mater Dei, sola Maria fuit, ejus hoc solius privilegium est." Justin Fèvre, ed., *Roberti Bellarmini Opera Omnia* (Paris: Vives, 1870-74), 5:381, quoted in Ellington, *From Sacred Body to Angelic Soul: Understanding Mary in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, 157.

in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke suggests that the Reformation provided a remarkable opportunity to pursue expanded pictorial modes of Marian imagery for a multiconfessional market.

Goltzius did not merely replicate traditional Roman Catholic themes in the *Life of the Virgin*, even though his scenes also function as an exegesis of the Gospels by Matthew and Luke. Through the choices he made of biblical narratives and inscriptions for the six prints, and his portrayal of Mary as a meek young girl, mother, and wife, his series could appeal to both Catholics and Protestants given the integrality of the canonical Gospels to their respective theological doctrines. Thus, I argue that the *Life of the Virgin* captures and reflects the multiconfessional religious climate of Goltzius's city of Haarlem, in particular, and the Dutch Republic, in general. An examination of the biblical sources for each print in the group, and a comparison of the series with Goltzius's earlier Marian prints, as well as with the print series of Mary's life produced by his predecessors and contemporaries, will illuminate the ways in which the *Life of the Virgin* upholds both Tridentine and Calvinist doctrine. I will also consider the series within the larger historical context of Haarlem in the 1590s and the possible influence on Goltzius of the city's "interconfessional conviviality" that was maintained there between Catholics and Protestants.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> I borrow the term "interconfessional conviviality" from Willem Frijhoff's excellent essay on the extent of coexistence among confessional groups in the Republic that tested the limitations of Calvinist tolerance toward Catholics. Frijhoff, "The Threshold of Toleration: Interconfessional Conviviality in Holland during the Early Modern Period," 39-65.

### **Goltzius's Narrative of Mary's Early Motherhood in the *Life of the Virgin***

The opening print of the *Life of the Virgin* provides compelling evidence that Goltzius intended his visualization of Mary's life for the broadest audience possible. In the inscription beneath the scene of the *Annunciation*, monogrammed and dated 1594, Cornelis Schonaeus writes:<sup>46</sup>

Be not afraid, girl, I am here, sent as a messenger from the kingdom of heaven on high; a virgin, you shall bear a child to the astonishment of nature, according to the predictions of the ancient Prophets, and the whole world will worship you as the mother of God.<sup>47</sup>

The address to Mary's devotees of "the whole world" suggests that Goltzius and the Catholic advisors with whom he may have collaborated also anticipated the entirety of humankind, regardless of confessional divisions, to venerate Mary. For the iconography of his six engravings, Goltzius drew from the two richest accounts of Mary's life in the New Testament: the narratives of Christ's birth and infancy in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke.<sup>48</sup> Although Goltzius designed and engraved the individual prints in his series out of their correct chronological order according to their biblical references, he deliberately placed his dedication to Wilhelm V within

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<sup>46</sup> The translations of the Latin inscriptions in Goltzius's *Life of the Virgin* series in this chapter derive from the catalogue of the recent retrospective exhibition of the artist's work that traveled to the Rijksmuseum, the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Toledo Museum of Art. Leeftang and Luijten, *Hendrick Goltzius (1558-1617): Drawings, Prints and Paintings*, 210-11.

<sup>47</sup> "Pone metum virgo, celsi tibi nuncius adsum / Missus ab arce poli, paries intacta stupente / Natura, ut veterum cecinere oracula Vatum, / Teque Dei matrem totus venerabitur orbis." Ibid., 210, cat. no. 75.1.

<sup>48</sup> According to Marina Warner and others, the two Gospels were written at least eighty years after the events they narrate. Warner, *Alone of All Her Sex: The Myth and the Cult of the Virgin Mary*, 4.

the composition of the *Annunciation*, which indicates that viewers should read scenes in their logical succession beginning with Mary's conception of Christ.<sup>49</sup>

The annunciation of Mary's miraculous pregnancy provides one of the most dramatic moments of her life as described in the New Testament (Luke 1:26-38). Luke's gospel recounts that the archangel Gabriel, sent by God, visited Mary in Nazareth and praised her with the greeting, "Hail, thou that art highly favored, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women" (Luke 1:28). Gabriel foretells the birth of Christ, calling him Jesus, the Son of God (Luke 1:31, 1:35), and reassures Mary that she will conceive him through the Holy Ghost so that her virginity will remain intact. Mary responds to Gabriel with her fiat, an acceptance of her duty, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word" (Luke 1:38).<sup>50</sup>

Goltzius's print, the *Annunciation*, condenses the long narrative into a single scene through a complex exchange of poses, gestures, and facial expressions between Gabriel and Mary. The angel enters Mary's study to find her reading at her lectern near a basket of linens and scissors denoting her womanly virtues. He approaches Mary at the right of the composition holding a lily with his left hand and conveys his news to her by gesturing toward her with his right, flattened palm. Mary gazes demurely upon the angel and reacts in disbelief to his presence by gently touching her

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<sup>49</sup> Hirschmann posits that the last print Goltzius produced in the series was the *Adoration of the Shepherds*. Otto Hirschmann, *Verzeichnis des graphischen Werks von Hendrick Goltzius*, 2nd ed. (Leipzig: Klinkhardt und Biermann, 1921), 80.

<sup>50</sup> On the conversation between Mary and Gabriel in Luke's Gospel, see Warner, *Alone of All Her Sex: The Myth and the Cult of the Virgin Mary*, 8-9.

chest with her right hand and lifting her left knee to rise from her platform. Swooning putti encircle Mary and Gabriel overhead as they part the clouded sky through which the Holy Ghost, which takes the form of a white dove bathed in rays of bright light, flies directly toward Mary's head in symbolism of Christ's incarnation. While Goltzius clearly represents Mary as a divine being, her bulky body, heavy robe, and demure facial expression suggest her dual role as the humble, earthly Mother of God.

The next print in Goltzius's sequence, the *Visitation*, monogrammed and dated 1593, depicts the meeting between Mary and her cousin Elizabeth following the annunciation (Luke 1:36-42). Luke recounts that when the two women initially see one another, the baby in Elizabeth's womb, John the Baptist, immediately leaps. Elizabeth begins her salutation to Mary, "Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb" (Luke 1:42). Mary responds to Elizabeth with her longest sustained speech in the Bible, the *Magnificat* (Luke 1:46-55), in which she rejoices over being chosen to bear the Son of God.<sup>51</sup> The inscription by Franco Estius beneath the image stresses Mary's unspoiled virginity and the divine nature of her child:

The maiden, full of God, pregnant by the Holy Ghost, went through the barren mountains to visit her relative Elizabeth. The infertile pregnant woman rejoiced, as did the child, then already a prophet, in the pregnant mother's womb. F. Estius.<sup>52</sup>

In Goltzius's illustration of the encounter between the two pregnant women, Mary passes through an arched doorway in a city wall to greet Elizabeth whose slightly

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 9.

<sup>52</sup> "Plena Deo virgo, coelesti Pneumate foeta, / Cognatam Helisaben montana per aspera visit; Exultat sterilis foecunda, exultat et infans / Iam tunc in gravidae genitricis ventre Prophetes. / F. Estius." Leeftang and Luijten, *Hendrick Goltzius (1558-1617): Drawings, Prints and Paintings*, 210, 335, cat. no. 75.2.



hunched back conveys deference to the Virgin, and her advanced age. The two women clasp their right hands together and with their left hands they touch each other's torso in acknowledgement of their mutual pregnancies. In this scene, the faint glint of Mary's halo identifies her as a celestial figure, yet her weighty body and cautious movement toward Elizabeth evoke the idea that she is also humble and earthly.

Goltzius's third print, the *Adoration of the Shepherds*, monogrammed and dated 1594, recalls the period after the Nativity in which Mary adores the Christ child in the company of Joseph in a manger. During the night, angels called upon shepherds herding their flock in nearby fields to come to the manger in order to see Christ where he lay with Mary and Joseph (Luke 2-7:12).<sup>53</sup> Estius's inscription reads:

See, the creator of heaven, the lord of all things, the King of Gods and man, is born under the poor roof of a miserable hut and He who is greater than the high ether, the sea, the earth, than all the structures of the great universe, lies inside in a manger. F. Estius.<sup>54</sup>

Goltzius situates the Holy Family with the shepherds in majestic, classically inspired ruins where Mary kneels on the ground and lifts a blanket covering the sleeping child to provide proof of Christ's incarnation. A tall shepherd standing behind Mary holds a candle to accentuate the effects of light in the nocturnal event, which further dramatizes the event. A multitude of putti enmeshed in thick clouds watch the figures

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<sup>53</sup> Warner, *Alone of All Her Sex: The Myth and the Cult of the Virgin Mary*, 9.

<sup>54</sup> "Daeli opifex, rerum dominus, Divûm atque hominum Rex / Nascitur en vilis tuguri sub paupere tecto, / Et praesepe tenet, quem non capit arguus aether, / Non mare, non tellus, non vasti machina mundi. / F. Estius." Leeflang and Luijten, *Hendrick Goltzius (1558-1617): Drawings, Prints and Paintings*, 210, 335, cat. no. 75.3.

from overhead. In the distance another angel flying in a brilliant oval-shaped beam of light suggests that more shepherds are on their way to the scene.

The following print, the *Adoration of the Magi*, monogrammed, from ca. 1594 and taken from the Gospel of Matthew, portrays the account of the three kings who followed a star they saw in the East that guided them to Jerusalem (Matthew 2:1-12).<sup>55</sup> The magi asked Herod if they might see the “King of the Jews,” after which a disturbed Herod ordered them to go to Bethlehem and bring the child back to him. The inscription by Estius addresses the dramatic moment in which the three men recognized the child as Christ and honored him with gifts:

The magi from the East follow the star to Bethlehem, kneel and throw down their crowns; they worship the boy in the secluded stable and present their pious gifts of fragrant incense, myrrh and costly gold. F. Estius.<sup>56</sup>

The three men, one of whom Goltzius depicts with dark skin, wear long and ornately embellished garments that emphasize their exotic, Eastern geographic origins.<sup>57</sup> The magi gather around the infant and solemnly hold their gifts for him beneath the large star illuminating the clouded sky that guided them to the site. The Holy Family and an

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<sup>55</sup> Warner, *Alone of All Her Sex: The Myth and the Cult of the Virgin Mary*, 5.

<sup>56</sup> “Eoi Reges Bethlen duce sydere ducti, / Poplite submisso, posito Didemate, adorant / Deserto puerum in stabulo, et pia munera promunt / Thuris odorati, Myrrhaeque, et divitis auri. / F. Estius.” Leeftang and Luijten, *Hendrick Goltzius (1558-1617): Drawings, Prints and Paintings*, 210, 335, cat. no. 75.5.

<sup>57</sup> The dark-skinned magus is often identified as Balthazar, and thus, as a signifier of the African region. As Trexler demonstrated, however, theological writers since the fifth century also called this figure both Caspar and Melchior. Trexler therefore numbers the magi in his study of their ethnic representations in art and literature as the first, second, and third kings rather than referring to them by name. Richard C. Trexler, *The Journey of the Magi: Meaning in History of a Christian Story* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 38-39, 102-7, 182-84, esp. 248 n. 99. See also Paul Henry Daniel Kaplan, *The Rise of the Black Magus in Western Art* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1985).

ox wait in front of the open doorway of a tall, stone structure at the left similar in architectural style to the building where Mary gave birth in the previous print, the *Adoration of the Shepherds*. Mary sits on a pillow at the left presenting the child held on her lap before a crowd of spectators to call attention to her majesty and Christ's corporeality. At the same time the downward tilt of her head conveys her humility.<sup>58</sup> Goltzius contrasts the child's figure with Mary's by encircling his head with a double halo—the only figure in the composition with that attribute. The child peers into a lidded container filled with coins held by one magus kneeling in front of the infant. A throng of spectators assembles in the background of an urban landscape to watch the presentation of gifts.

In the next engraving of the series, the *Circumcision*, monogrammed and dated 1594, Goltzius underscores Mary's integral role in the incarnation in his crowded composition through an inscription by Schonaeus based on Luke's gospel:

You see how Jesus is circumcised on the eighth day and in his tender little body receives a wound according to the rules of the ancient law and the custom that has been observed for many years. C. Schonaeus.<sup>59</sup>

The inscription refers to Mary's dutiful task as a young mother in bringing the child to a temple eight days after his birth to undergo the obligatory Jewish ritual (Luke 2:21).<sup>60</sup> Unlike the other five prints in the series, Goltzius localizes the *Circumcision*

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<sup>58</sup> Warner, *Alone of All Her Sex: The Myth and the Cult of the Virgin Mary*, 105.

<sup>59</sup> "Cernis ut octava sit circumciscus Iesus / Luce puer, tenero accipiens in corpore vulnus, / Ad normam veteris legis, ritumque receptum, / Isacidis multos observatumque per annos. / C. Schonaeus." Leeftang and Luijten, *Hendrick Goltzius (1558-1617): Drawings, Prints and Paintings*, 210, 335, cat. no. 75.4.

<sup>60</sup> Warner, *Alone of All Her Sex: The Myth and the Cult of the Virgin Mary*, 9.

to Haarlem by situating the event inside the groin-vaulted chapel of the Brewers' Guild in the city's St. Bavo Church.<sup>61</sup> The chapel, decorated with its distinctive copper chandelier and a wall sconce, is located in the south transept of the church.<sup>62</sup> A bald man wearing spectacles—the *mohel*—delicately performs his task of circumcising the infant while a large-framed, bearded and hooded male figure seated on a chair in the middle ground—the *sandak*—holds the child. Nearly two-dozen figures congregate in the chapel around Mary and Joseph who stand in the left middle ground. Goltzius also included his self-portrait at the right pier. His attendance at the event merges the contemporary with the biblical time periods, which emphasizes the post-Reformation veneration of Mary at the St. Bavo Church.

The concluding print in Goltzius's series, the *Holy Family with John the Baptist as a Child*, monogrammed and dated 1593, conflates two separate events: the Holy Family's Flight into Egypt (Matthew 2:13-15) and the adult John the Baptist's recognition of Christ (John 1:29). The family's escape to Egypt after their meeting with the magi was a consequence of Herod's plot to kill all of the newborn infants in Bethlehem in retaliation for the magi not informing him of Christ's whereabouts—the

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<sup>61</sup> On the significance of the Brewers' Chapel for the meaning of the *Circumcision*, see James J. Bloom, "Mastering the Medium: Reference and Audience in Goltzius's Print of the *Circumcision*," *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 52 (2001): 92.

<sup>62</sup> On the identification of the chandelier as Flemish, see Walter S. Melion, *Shaping the Netherlandish Canon: Karel van Mander's "Schilder-Boeck"* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1991), 55. On the chandeliers and sconces in the St. Bavo Church, see Mochizuki, *The Netherlandish Image after Iconoclasm, 1566-1672. Material Religion in the Dutch Golden Age*, 295-300, 316-19 nn. 91-108.

news of which came to Joseph in a dream.<sup>63</sup> Mary's protection of the child and her union with Joseph as his wife underscores her motherhood, chastity, and Christ's humanity.

Goltzius's print, the *Holy Family with John the Baptist as a Child*, includes the infant Baptist in reference to the moment in which the adult Christ approached John in order to be baptized by him, and John said to him: "Behold the lamb of God" (John 1:29). The engraving's unsigned inscription also recalls the Visitation when Elizabeth, the mother of John the Baptist, realized her own pregnancy. According to Luke, Elizabeth heard Mary enter her house and "the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost" (Luke 2:41). The print's inscription reads:

The herald of the Lord, who is suckled at his mother's breast, like a child, strokes the child and plays sweetly with him; the baby whom he recognized, leaping up, while he was still in his mother's womb, he also pointed to with his finger when they were a little older.<sup>64</sup>

Mountains in the distant background of *Holy Family with John the Baptist as a Child* indicate that the Holy Family and John the Baptist are located in a foreign landscape. Joseph stands over Mary who sits on the ground and holds the child in her lap as he touches his left hand to the Baptist's cheek. The physical connection made between the child and the Baptist conveys the latter's declaration of Christ as

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<sup>63</sup> Warner, *Alone of All Her Sex: The Myth and the Cult of the Virgin Mary*, 9.

<sup>64</sup> "Praecursor Domini lactantis ab ubere matris / Blanditur puero puer, et colludit amice, / Quem praecognovit saliens utero abditus, hunc et / Indice monstravit digito crescentibus annis." Leeftang and Luijten, *Hendrick Goltzius (1558-1617): Drawings, Prints and Paintings*, 211, 335, cat. no. 75.6.

humanity's redeemer (John 1:29).<sup>65</sup> On the left side of the composition, a cat stands in the windowsill of a wooden structure clutching a bird in its front paws. Two elements in the composition are repeated from the first print in the series, the *Annunciation*: a large vessel on the ground at the left of the composition contains a tall stem of lilies, and in the right foreground are Mary's linens in a basket with scissors. This sixth, final print thus completes Goltzius's image of Mary as a pure, obedient, and devout mother and wife from her virgin birth to her chaste marriage. Thus, the print's traditional Marian iconography enriches the devotional meaning of the series for their viewers.

### **The International and Local Art Market for the *Life of the Virgin***

The intended audience for Goltzius's *Life of the Virgin* series has been a matter of great speculation among art historians. Scholars agree that Goltzius's impetus for publishing the scenes in an easily reproducible print medium was largely motivated by the potential for fame and profit, but they slightly disagree on the groups to whom the artist directed the prints.<sup>66</sup> Relying heavily upon Karel van Mander's biography of Goltzius in the *Schilder-Boeck* as their main source for the artist's life and patronage, scholars posit that the series would have appealed

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<sup>65</sup> See also the discussion of John the Baptist in chapter two of this dissertation.

<sup>66</sup> Huigen Leeftang notes that Goltzius's desire for financial gain and to exceed the expectations of his patrons led him to publish his own prints in 1582 and experiment with innovative choices of subject matter. *Ibid.*, 39.

primarily to a single patron and/or two groups of collectors.<sup>67</sup> First, Goltzius specifically intended his calculated display of artistic virtuosity for Wilhelm V, the Catholic duke of Bavaria to whom the artist dedicated the series on its opening page. As Walter Melion has shown, Wilhelm would certainly have taken pleasure in the Marian theme of the series because it supported the Council of Trent's edicts to depict faithfully biblical themes as they are described in the Old and New Testaments, and to dedicate oneself to religion above all else.<sup>68</sup>

Second, the majority of scholars, including Melion, posit that an elite group of international art connoisseurs would have purchased the prints—either individually or as a complete series.<sup>69</sup> These scholars base their hypothesis on the last part of the dedication inscription in which Goltzius compares himself to Proteus, the shape-shifting mythological Greek sea god:

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<sup>67</sup> Van Mander and Miedema, *The Lives of the Illustrious Netherlandish and German Painters, from the first edition of the "Schilder-boeck" (1603-1604)*, 1:284v-285r.

<sup>68</sup> Council of Trent (1545-63), *Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent*, trans. H. J. Schroeder (St. Louis and London: B. Herder Book Co., 1941). See also Freedberg, *Iconoclasm and Painting in the Revolt of the Netherlands, 1566-1609*, 55-58. For the scholarship addressing Goltzius's intention to appeal to Wilhelm's artistic and Roman Catholic convictions, see Walter S. Melion, "Piety and Pictorial Manner in Hendrick Goltzius's Early *Life of the Virgin*," 44-51.

<sup>69</sup> In his biography of Goltzius, Van Mander recounts that after producing the *Life of the Virgin*, Goltzius used a hot coal or iron to remove his monogram from the *Circumcision*. He then smoked and crumpled the sheet to make it appear old before he sold it. Van Mander added that it was "very funny" that collectors purchased impressions of the altered print at a "high price" because they mistook it for original work by Albrecht Dürer. Van Mander and Miedema, *The Lives of the Illustrious Netherlandish and German Painters, from the first edition of the "Schilder-boeck" (1603-1604)*, 1:284v.

As Proteus changed amidst the waves out of burning love for the beautiful Pomona, so does Goltzius, the admirable engraver and inventor, with his varied art, for you, Oh Prince. C. Schonaeus.<sup>70</sup>

In each print, Goltzius artfully imitated, reinvented, and surpassed well-known prints by two prominent Northern printmakers, Albrecht Dürer and Lucas van Leyden, as well as reproductive engravings by printmakers, such as Cornelis Cort, and paintings by Italian artists, such as Raphael. Wilhelm and other connoisseurs would have found the depths of Goltzius's knowledge of art history particularly impressive.<sup>71</sup> In his

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<sup>70</sup> "Ut mediis Proteus se transformabat in undis, / Formosae cupido Pomonae captus amore: / Sic varia Princeps tibi nunc se Goltzius arte / Commutat, sculptor mirabilis, atque repertos. / C. Schonaeus." Leeﬂang and Luijten, *Hendrick Goltzius (1558-1617): Drawings, Prints and Paintings*, 210, 335, cat. no. 75.1.

<sup>71</sup> The general consensus among scholars is that Goltzius's primary purpose in creating the *Life of the Virgin* series was to imitate and surpass the work by his artistic predecessors and contemporaries. Acton argues that his dedication to Wilhelm demonstrates that Goltzius mainly sought the duke's patronage instead of catering to a "middle-class commercial market." David Acton, "The Northern Masters in Goltzius's *Meisterstiche*," *Bulletin, Museum of Art and Archaeology, University of Michigan* 4 (1981): 49; Silver, "Imitation and Emulation: Goltzius as Evolutionary Reproductive Engraver," 129-53. Two scholars, Leeﬂang and Melion, have opposing views on Goltzius's use of Italian pictorial precedents. Leeﬂang argues that Goltzius used reproductive prints after original Italian paintings for four of the six engravings in the series. Melion contends that Goltzius based his prints on his memory of Italian paintings he saw during his trip there. Leeﬂang, however, argues that many of Melion's claims are "unconvincing." He points out that Melion's comparison of Goltzius's *Visitation* with a painting by Raphael of the same subject is flawed given that the painting was originally located in Aquila, a remote village, and not, according to Melion, in Rome's "San Silvestro all'Aquila," which does not exist. Leeﬂang added that Raphael's painting was not reproduced in print at the time Goltzius produced the series, which further weakens Melion's argument. For Leeﬂang, see Leeﬂang and Luijten, *Hendrick Goltzius (1558-1617): Drawings, Prints and Paintings*, 208, 212, 215. For Melion, see Walter S. Melion, "Hendrick Goltzius's Project of Reproductive Engraving," *Art History* 13, no. 4 (December 1990): 477; Melion, *Shaping the Netherlandish Canon: Karel van Mander's "Schilder-Boeck"*, 56, 63; Melion, "Piety and Pictorial Manner in Hendrick Goltzius's Early *Life of the Virgin*," 50. See also Ger Luijten et al., eds., *Dawn of the Golden Age. Northern Netherlandish Art, 1580-1620*, 366 n. 10.



biography of the artist, Van Mander praised Goltzius's reinvention of earlier works in the *Life of the Virgin* and suggested that his virtuoso treatment of the burin was an act of skill intended to elevate his status as an artist on an international scale in competition with his Italian counterparts:

[B]ut I shall overlook much for brevity's sake and recount the six pieces that he executed, having recently returned from Italy: for pondering the hands he had seen elsewhere, he fashioned with a single hand a diversity of hands [in prints] of his invention, and a thing worthy of astonishment, finished them very quickly, for he wanted them ready for the Frankfurt Fair.<sup>72</sup>

Van Mander relays that Goltzius sent the prints not only to the biannual Frankfurt Book Fair, but also distributed them in Rome, Venice, and Amsterdam where he could further increase the size and scope of his international sales.<sup>73</sup> Suggesting that Goltzius's imitative strategy in the *Life of the Virgin* is the aspect of the prints that

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<sup>72</sup> “[M]aer ick sal om cortheyt veel overslaende, verhalen van ses stucken, die hy uyt Italien gecomen wesende dede: want bedenckende wat hy over al voor handelingen hadde ghesien, heeft met een eenighe handt verscheyden handelingen van zijn inventie ghe-toont, en dat verwonderens weert is, binnen seer corten tijt sulcx te weghe ghebracht, willende reedt wesen tegen een Franckfoortsche Mis oft Marct.” Van Mander and Miedema, *The Lives of the Illustrious Netherlandish and German Painters, from the first edition of the "Schilder-boeck" (1603-1604)*, 1:284v. For the English translation of this passage, see Walter S. Melion, "Hendrick Goltzius's Project of Reproductive Engraving," 477. On Van Mander's consideration of Goltzius as the heir to reproductive printmaking, see Huigen Leeftang, "De laatste gravure van Hendrick Goltzius?" *Kunstlicht* 11, no. 2-3 (1990): 33-40.

<sup>73</sup> Van Mander wrote, “[B]innen seer corten tijt sulcx te weghe ghebracht, willende reedt wesen tegen een Franckfoortsche Mis oft Marct” (And what is worthy of note, did so in a very short time, preparing them for the Frankfurt fair). Van Mander and Miedema, *The Lives of the Illustrious Netherlandish and German Painters, from the first edition of the "Schilder-boeck" (1603-1604)*, 1:284v. See also Melion, *Shaping the Netherlandish Canon: Karel van Mander's "Schilder-Boeck,"* 45, 229 n. 24.

appealed to his audience, Van Mander applauded the artist, writing “In sum, these six plates were sufficient to demonstrate what he could accomplish in this art.”<sup>74</sup>

Scholars have conducted meticulous formal analyses of the *Life of the Virgin* to substantiate their hypotheses that Goltzius appropriated old master imagery for each scene as a means to appeal to an audience primarily comprised of print collectors.<sup>75</sup> Sources for the *Annunciation* remain unclear, but art historians have suggested that the composition generally resembles selected paintings by the Italian artists Raphael, Titian, and Federico Zuccaro, and more specifically Federico Barocci’s print of the same subject, the *Annunciation* (fig. 11), 1584-88.<sup>76</sup> The *Visitation* compares to a painting by Barocci that Gijsbert van Veen reproduced in an engraving of 1588 (fig. 12), which Jan Sadeler also copied in print in 1582 (fig. 13).<sup>77</sup> Scholars have also posited that Goltzius’s *Visitation* evokes not a specific painting by

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<sup>74</sup> “Summa, dese ses stucken waren ghenoech, om te ghetuyghen, wat hy in dese Const vermach.” Van Mander and Miedema, *The Lives of the Illustrious Netherlandish and German Painters, from the first edition of the "Schilder-boeck" (1603-1604)*, 1:284v-285r.

<sup>75</sup> For a brief comparison of Goltzius’s prints with work by Italian painters, see Hirschmann, *Verzeichnis des graphischen Werks von Hendrick Goltzius*, 6-12.

<sup>76</sup> Peter van der Coelen, *Rembrandts passie. Het Nieuwe Testament in de Nederlandse prentkunst van de zestiende en zeventiende eeuw*, 214; Melion, “Piety and Pictorial Manner in Hendrick Goltzius’s Early *Life of the Virgin*,” 50.

<sup>77</sup> Van der Coelen, *Rembrandts passie. Het Nieuwe Testament in de Nederlandse prentkunst van de zestiende en zeventiende eeuw*, 52-53; Leeftang and Luijten, *Hendrick Goltzius (1558-1617): Drawings, Prints and Paintings*, 211-12. Melion suggests numerous other sources for the *Visitation*, including works by Parmigianino, Raphael, Andrea del Sarto, and Federico Zuccaro. Melion, “Piety and Pictorial Manner in Hendrick Goltzius’s Early *Life of the Virgin*,” 50.

Parmigianino, but his artistic style in general.<sup>78</sup> In their analysis of Goltzius's *Adoration of the Shepherds* and its dramatic use of light, scholars point to paintings by Jacopo Bassano, Titian, and Veronese as possible influences that Netherlandish reproductive printmakers copied in engravings.<sup>79</sup>

Goltzius's prints, the *Adoration of the Magi* and the *Circumcision*, primarily reflect the work of northern printmakers. According to Van Mander, Goltzius based his two scenes on prints of the same themes produced by Lucas van Leyden (fig. 14)

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<sup>78</sup> Leeftang and Luijten, *Hendrick Goltzius (1558-1617): Drawings, Prints and Paintings*, 208, 215; The University of Connecticut Museum of Art, *Hendrik Goltzius and the Printmakers of Haarlem*, 28.

<sup>79</sup> Van der Coelen, *Rembrandts passie. Het Nieuwe Testament in de Nederlandse prentkunst van de zestiende en zeventiende eeuw*, 215; Melion, "Piety and Pictorial Manner in Hendrick Goltzius's Early *Life of the Virgin*," 50; The University of Connecticut Museum of Art, *Hendrik Goltzius and the Printmakers of Haarlem*, 28. Leeftang suggests an engraving by Egidius Sadeler after Hans van Aachen of 1588 (H. 32) as another possible source for the print. Luijten et al., eds., *Dawn of the Golden Age. Northern Netherlandish Art, 1580-1620*, 366.

and Albrecht Dürer (fig. 15).<sup>80</sup> Scholars regard Dürer's woodcut, from his series the *Life of the Virgin*, 1502-11, as one of Goltzius's strongest influences.<sup>81</sup>

Scholars have also pointed to Jan Sadeler's engraving, the *Circumcision* (fig. 16), 1581, from the series, the *Childhood of Christ*, 1579-82, after a design by Maarten de Vos, as an important pictorial precedent for the *Circumcision* in Goltzius's series.<sup>82</sup> Like the *Circumcision* in Dürer's series, Sadeler's print of the same subject shares overt similarities with Goltzius's in terms of its form and Marian content. Goltzius's *Circumcision* has also been compared to Dürer's *St. Jerome in his Study* (fig. 17) for its use of light.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>80</sup>Van Mander and Miedema, *The Lives of the Illustrious Netherlandish and German Painters, from the first edition of the "Schilder-boeck" (1603-1604)*, 1:284v-285r. See also Acton, "The Northern Masters in Goltzius's *Meisterstiche*," 43-45; Van der Coelen, *Rembrandts passie. Het Nieuwe Testament in de Nederlandse prentkunst van de zestiende en zeventiende eeuw*, 215; Leeftang and Luijten, *Hendrick Goltzius (1558-1617): Drawings, Prints and Paintings*, 212; Melion, "Piety and Pictorial Manner in Hendrick Goltzius's Early *Life of the Virgin*," 47. Jan Piet Filedt Kok argues that the *Circumcision* was one of the last prints in the series to be completed by Goltzius given its inscription by Schonaeus, who took over for Estius midway through the project. Jan Piet Filedt Kok, "Hendrick Goltzius—Engraver, Designer, and Publisher, 1582-1600," 160-63. For Lucas van Leyden's engraving, *Esther before Ahasuerus*, 1518, as a model for Goltzius's the *Adoration of the Magi*, see Luijten et al., eds., *Dawn of the Golden Age. Northern Netherlandish Art, 1580-1620*, 363; Leeftang and Luijten, *Hendrick Goltzius (1558-1617): Drawings, Prints and Paintings*, 208, 213.

<sup>81</sup>For Dürer's influence on Goltzius and his series, see Leeftang and Luijten, *Hendrick Goltzius (1558-1617): Drawings, Prints and Paintings*, 212.

<sup>82</sup>On Sadeler's series, see Isabelle de Ramaix, *The Illustrated Bartsch: Johan Sadeler I*, ed. John T. Spike (Norwalk, CT: Abaris Books, 1999-2003), 1:148-54, cat. nos. 7001.130-41; F. W. H. Hollstein, *Dutch and Flemish Etchings, Engravings, and Woodcuts, ca. 1450-1700*, 21:105-7, nos. 160-71, and 44-45: nos. 256-67.

<sup>83</sup>Dürer's prints, *Apostle Simon* and *Pilate Washing his Hands*, 1512, from the *Passion* series, have also been suggested as models for the *Circumcision*, as well as Italian paintings in the style of Bassano and others. For the two most extensive studies of the sources Goltzius used for this print, see Bloom, "Mastering the

The last print in Goltzius's series, the *Holy Family with John the Baptist as a Child*, shares similarities with two engravings by the Netherlandish printmaker Cornelis Cort after Federico Barocci's painting *Rest on the Flight into Egypt* (fig. 18), ca. 1573—the first from 1575 (fig. 19), and the second from 1577 (fig. 20).<sup>84</sup>

However, numerous differences in the arrangement of figures, poses, gestures, and the use of light between the works of Goltzius, Cort, and Barocci supports Huigen Leeftang's assessment of Goltzius's series as a critical analysis rather than rote imitation of Italian and Netherlandish art. Leeftang remarked that the artist did not merely imitate previous works by other painters and printmakers, but he reinvented them to the extent that the *Life of the Virgin* presents a "commentary on the history

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Medium: Reference and Audience in Goltzius's Print of the *Circumcision*," 87-90; Melion, "*Cordis circumcisio in spiritu*: Imitation and the Wounded Christ in Hendrick Goltzius's *Circumcision* of 1594," 32-48. See also Acton, "The Northern Masters in Goltzius's *Meisterstiche*," 47; Leeftang and Luijten, *Hendrick Goltzius (1558-1617): Drawings, Prints and Paintings*, 212; Luijten et al., eds., *Dawn of the Golden Age. Northern Netherlandish Art, 1580-1620*, 363; Melion, "Piety and Pictorial Manner in Hendrick Goltzius's Early *Life of the Virgin*," 47.

<sup>84</sup> Van der Coelen, *Rembrandts passie. Het Nieuwe Testament in de Nederlandse prentkunst van de zestiende en zeventiende eeuw*, 54; Leeftang and Luijten, *Hendrick Goltzius (1558-1617): Drawings, Prints and Paintings*, 213-14, 322 n. 48; Luijten et al., eds., *Dawn of the Golden Age. Northern Netherlandish Art, 1580-1620*, 363; Melion, "Piety and Pictorial Manner in Hendrick Goltzius's Early *Life of the Virgin*," 47; The University of Connecticut Museum of Art, *Hendrik Goltzius and the Printmakers of Haarlem*, 28. For a comparison of the print and Antonio Correggio's use of hand gestures to connect multiple figures in a composition, such as his painting in the Musée du Louvre, *Mystic Marriage of Saint Catherine with Saint Sebastian*, ca. 1528, see Melion, "*Cordis circumcisio in spiritu*: Imitation and the Wounded Christ in Hendrick Goltzius's *Circumcision* of 1594," 37, 40, 71 nn. 24, 25. On Cort's engraving after *La Madonna del Gatto* and its pictorial relationship to Goltzius's scene of the Holy Family, see Melion, "Hendrick Goltzius's Project of Reproductive Engraving," 460-62, 476. On Barocci's *Flight into Egypt*, see Stuart Lingo, *Federico Barocci: Allure and Devotion in Late Renaissance Painting* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2008), 224-42.

and status of printmaking.”<sup>85</sup> Thus, by virtue of the complex pictorial referents to earlier works with which his viewers could delight themselves as they methodically decoded each print, Goltzius in effect redefined the genre of Netherlandish reproductive printmaking.<sup>86</sup> Leeftang’s mode of inquiry, however, does not account for the social, political, or religious interests of Goltzius’s audiences, which undermines the assumption that the series was intended purely as an exercise of artistic virtuosity.

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<sup>85</sup> Leeftang and Luijten, *Hendrick Goltzius (1558-1617): Drawings, Prints and Paintings*, 208, see also 212.

<sup>86</sup> Melion primarily examines the series within the context of Karel van Mander’s theoretical term, *teyckenconst*, which refers to the ability to adopt an artist’s precise manner of engraving or painting and overall artistic sensibility as part of the method of imitation. He also examines the series within the context of Van Mander’s concept of *handelingh*, meaning the “pictorial manner, as rendered by the hand,” which Goltzius imitates in another artist’s work more so than the image itself. Even when analyzing the religious significance of the series, however, Melion usually focuses on the impact of Goltzius’s Protean imitation of other artists as it related to the intellectual, artistic, and spiritual needs of his audience rather than theological issues or the series’ association with other works on Marian themes. Melion, “*Karel van Mander's 'Life of Goltzius': Defining the Paradigm of Protean Virtuosity in Haarlem around 1600*,” 113-33, esp. 120-21. Melion, “Hendrick Goltzius's Project of Reproductive Engraving,” 458-87, esp. 458-62, 464, 476-80; Melion, “Piety and Pictorial Manner in Hendrick Goltzius's Early *Life of the Virgin*,” 46-49; Walter S. Melion, “Memory and the Kinship of Writing and Picturing in the Early Seventeenth-Century Netherlands,” *Word & Image* 8, no. 1 (1992): 48-70. On *teyckenconst*, see Melion, *Shaping the Netherlandish Canon: Karel van Mander's 'Schilder-Boeck'*, 38-39, 45-47. On *handelingh*, see Van Mander and Miedema, *The Lives of the Illustrious Netherlandish and German Painters, from the first edition of the 'Schilder-boeck' (1603-1604)*, 1:283r-284r; Walter S. Melion and Susanne Kuchler, “Introduction: Memory, Cognition, and Image Production,” in *Images of Memory: On Remembering and Representation*, ed. Susanne Kuchler and Walter S. Melion (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991), 12-19; Walter S. Melion, “Theory and Practice: Reproductive Engravings in the Sixteenth-Century Netherlands,” in *Graven Images: The Rise of Professional Printmakers in Antwerp and Haarlem, 1540-1640*, ed. Timothy Riggs and Larry Silver (Evanston, IL: Mary and Leigh Block Gallery, Northwestern University, 1993), 48, 57.

The third potential market for Goltzius's the *Life of the Virgin*—residents of Haarlem—takes into account the artist's local audience that the previous two interpretations overlook.<sup>87</sup> James J. Bloom recently proposed that the members of the Brewers' Guild in Haarlem could have taken a keen interest in the series because Goltzius depicted their private chapel in the St. Bavo Church as the setting for the *Circumcision*. Goltzius maintained numerous connections to Haarlem's brewers, including Jan Mathijsz Ban who accompanied the artist to Italy prior to the execution of the *Life of the Virgin* series.<sup>88</sup> Bloom's argument is particularly compelling given that Goltzius figuratively places the viewer of the *Circumcision* in the Brewers' private office, the *Brouwers Kantoer*, where guild members presumably stored documents and liturgical objects. Goltzius created a niche market for his print since he "fashions the identity of the informed viewer *as a brewer*" (italics in the original).<sup>89</sup>

As much as the study of Goltzius's printmaking techniques and marketing strategies greatly enrich our understanding of his artistic practice, scholars have not fully explored the significance of his series' Marian theme. Indeed, with the exception of Walter Melion, who has devoted much of his career to examining Goltzius's series under discussion, other scholars have largely overlooked or outright rejected the notion of a devotional purpose for the series. Huigen Leeftang's essay in a recent

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<sup>87</sup> Bloom, "Mastering the Medium: Reference and Audience in Goltzius's Print of the *Circumcision*," 78-103, esp. 92-97.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., 94; Nichols, "Hendrick Goltzius—Documents and Printed Literature Concerning his Life," 111-13.

<sup>89</sup> Bloom, "Mastering the Medium: Reference and Audience in Goltzius's Print of the *Circumcision*," 95.

exhibition catalogue focused almost entirely on Goltzius's pictorial sources for each print. He only briefly mentioned, in the concluding paragraph, that the series had a "counter-reformational character" in light of its Latin inscriptions and dedication to Wilhelm V. His lack of attention to the series' Marian theme and its relationship to post-Tridentine theological doctrine was conspicuous.<sup>90</sup> In a similar manner, James Bloom's excellent study of Goltzius's *Circumcision* also paid little attention to the religious meaning of the print. Bloom focused his study on its relevance to the members of the Brewers' Guild of Haarlem. In a footnote, Bloom commented that the devotional function was only secondary for the broadest segment of Goltzius's audience.<sup>91</sup>

Although Bloom convincingly argues that the Brewers' Guild was one of the primary audiences for the *Circumcision*, his claim that the religious theme of the series is of less relevance than the print's pictorial sources or the chapel's portrayal is unpersuasive. If Goltzius merely aspired to honor a Haarlem guild or, as in the case of *The Nine Muses* print series of 1592, to pay homage to his artistic predecessors, he could have easily turned to a wide variety of secular themes instead of to Mary's life.<sup>92</sup> In view of Goltzius's highly finished prints, their pious inscriptions, and his return to the format of a series that was popular in pre-Reformation art, the Marian subject of the *Life of the Virgin* appears much more significant than Bloom suggests.

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<sup>90</sup> Leeflang and Luijten, *Hendrick Goltzius (1558-1617): Drawings, Prints and Paintings*, 215. See also Luijten et al., eds., *Dawn of the Golden Age. Northern Netherlandish Art, 1580-1620*, 366.

<sup>91</sup> Bloom, "Mastering the Medium: Reference and Audience in Goltzius's Print of the *Circumcision*," 103 n. 74.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid.



Walter Melion's assertions concerning the religious meaning of the *Life of the Virgin* also limit our understanding of the series. His recent scholarly contribution on the devotional function of the *Life of the Virgin* examines the series in general, and the *Circumcision* in particular, through the lens of three specific sixteenth-century Jesuit theological treatises that contain meditations on Mary.<sup>93</sup> Melion contends that Goltzius's prints mirror the treatises given the artist's Protean ability of imitation that engaged viewers in the act of visual meditation as they systematically decoded the pictorial models he used in each composition. Thus, the pious and virtuoso series functions as Goltzius's demonstration to Wilhelm V that the artist is worthy of the duke's patronage. Among the several Jesuit-inspired meditative elements of the *Circumcision*, Melion suggests that the technique of incising a plate in the intaglio engraving process assimilates the manner of cutting in the surgical procedure of a circumcision, thus invoking the viewer's contemplation of the event itself while meditating upon Goltzius's print.<sup>94</sup> In the same essay Melion concedes that a Calvinist audience may also have responded positively to the series, not for its religious meaning but for its attempt to create art in the service of God as did Protestant rhetoricians while performing in religious *rederijker* plays. Yet he still

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<sup>93</sup> The Jesuit guide books to which Melion compares Goltzius's series include Franciscus Costerus's *Da vita et laudibus Deiparae Mariae Virginis*, 1588, Petrus Canisius's *Notae in Evangelicis lectiones*, 1591, and Hironymus Natalis's *Adnotationes et meditationes in Evangelica*, 1595, which was not published until two years after Goltzius completed his series. Melion, "Cordis circumcisio in spiritu: Imitation and the Wounded Christ in Hendrick Goltzius's *Circumcision* of 1594," 30-77, esp. 30-57.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid., 32, 52.

maintains that the Marian theme of the *Life of the Virgin* pertained to a distinctly Catholic audience.<sup>95</sup>

If we accept the conclusions of scholars that Goltzius sought international celebrity through the *Life of the Virgin*, the series must have had significance for both Catholics and Protestants. After all, scholars have called attention to two conflicting aspects of the prints' religious meaning. On one hand, Goltzius undeniably aimed the series at a distinctly Catholic audience through his dedication to Duke Wilhelm V. On the other hand, he patently addressed a Protestant audience by representing the Brewers' Chapel in the south transept of Haarlem's St. Bavo Church as the setting for the *Circumcision*. As mentioned previously, Goltzius chose to portray the *Circumcision* from the vantage point of the Guild's administrative office located in the adjacent room to the chapel. By utilizing the recognizable space of a converted, Reformed church as the site for a biblical event, Goltzius acknowledged the church's Catholic past as well as its Calvinist present. Thus, the *Circumcision* would resonate powerfully for both Catholic and Protestant viewers.<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> Ibid., 58-65.

<sup>96</sup> Given the single-sheet format of the *Life of the Virgin* series, Goltzius could have reasonably marketed the separate prints in the series to either Catholics or Calvinists depending upon the appropriateness of each scene's iconography to its potential viewers. For example, it seems logical that Calvinists would have taken particular interest in the *Circumcision* because of its depiction of the Reformed, St. Bavo Church. Yet, in light of Goltzius's prominent visibility in Haarlem, his close connections with other Haarlem artists, such as Karel van Mander, and the acclaim he received for the series from international audiences, it seems likely that both local Catholic and Protestant patrons of art would have known and responded to the series as a whole regardless of whether they actually purchased it in its entirety. For Van Mander's description of Goltzius's sale of the *Circumcision* as an individual print, see footnote 69.

Moreover, Goltzius captures the continued significance of Marian devotion for Haarlem's Calvinists by associating the St. Bavo Church with the scene of the *Circumcision*, and, by extension, the *Life of the Virgin* series. Goltzius positions Mary in a recognizable, Calvinist architectural space that clearly has been purged of the sculpture, stained glass windows, and paintings that adorned it before iconoclasm when it was used for Roman Catholic worship.<sup>97</sup> The clear glass windows and unembellished wall surfaces form a striking contrast to the scene of the circumcision in the foreground in which Mary figures prominently. The only ornamental fixtures that Goltzius includes in the *Circumcision* are the copper chandelier and sconce in the Brewers' Chapel, neither of which had any religious meaning and thus would not have offended Protestants.

Although the setting of the St. Bavo Church in the *Circumcision* is recognizable, it was not presented as a Catholic space. Goltzius was keenly aware of the appearance of the cathedral in its most bedecked state in 1577, the year before iconoclasm. He also would have known the volumes of painting, sculpture, stained glass windows, and liturgical objects that were destroyed, sold, or displayed elsewhere in the city after the church's reconsecration. He could have easily recreated the St. Bavo Church's original, Catholic decorations for the *Circumcision* based on his firsthand knowledge of the space before iconoclasm. Likewise, he could have included the types of artwork in the print that he probably saw in other Catholic

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<sup>97</sup> On the exterior and interior ornamentation of the St. Bavo Church before iconoclasm, see Mochizuki, *The Netherlandish Image after Iconoclasm, 1566-1672. Material Religion in the Dutch Golden Age*, 25-103.

churches during his journey through the Germanic states and Italy just prior to engraving the *Life of the Virgin*. Goltzius's choice to situate Mary in a distinctly Protestant space, however, demonstrates his intention to appeal to a multiconfessional audience.

A visitor today at the St. Bavo Church might peer through the rib-vaulted Brewers' Chapel toward the majestic, whitewashed north wall of the nave, and see the tumultuous history of the church unfold. When the church functioned as a cathedral, the overwhelmingly rich panoply of colors generated by the numerous sculptures, altarpieces, and stained glass windows would have greatly enhanced the devotees' spiritual experience of traveling from its portal to the high altar in remembrance of Christ's route to Golgotha.<sup>98</sup> None of these details appear in Goltzius's print.

Goltzius also leaves the wall spaces above the column capitals that flank either side of the nave free from figural sculpture, which might have decorated them before iconoclasm. The nave's sturdy columns, one of which rises from behind the head of Goltzius's self-portrait in the middle ground of the *Circumcision*, support the lower arcade and the monumental windows of the clerestory.<sup>99</sup> The specific columns in Goltzius's print that remain unadorned are probably those numbered "15" and "17" on the ground plan of the church (fig. 21) that was created by Pieter Wils for Samuel van Ampzing's history of Haarlem, *Beschryvinghe ende Lof der Stad Haerlem*

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<sup>98</sup> On the significance of the procession at the St. Bavo Church, see Ibid., 29.

<sup>99</sup> Altars decorated the lower part of the columns that were maintained by the city's guild at which their members would have worshipped numerous times throughout the day. Ibid., 30, fig. 1.7, 39.

(Description and Praise of the City of Haarlem), published in 1628.<sup>100</sup> In contrast, Simon Fokke's engraving of the St. Bavo Church's interior from the eighteenth century depicts numerous statues above the column capitals in the nave (fig. 22).<sup>101</sup> Although Fokke imaginatively recreated the pandemonium incited by iconoclasm that occurred in May 1578, the figural sculptures would not have been unusual in late medieval church decoration. In another example, the statuary commonly displayed above column capitals in typical Netherlandish Catholic churches is represented in Frans Hogenberg's hand-colored etching, *Iconoclasm, 1566* (fig. 23), ca. 1566-90, of an interior as it was pillaged during the iconoclastic riots.<sup>102</sup> Today, analogous figures

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<sup>100</sup> Ampzing, *Beschryvinge ende lof der stad Haerlem in Holland* [Description and Praise of the City of Haarlem in Holland]. For two highly detailed ground plans of the St. Bavo Church before and after iconoclasm that indicate the locations and dedications of the church's chapels, columns, stained glass windows, organs, lecterns, and so forth, see Mochizuki, *The Netherlandish Image after Iconoclasm, 1566-1672. Material Religion in the Dutch Golden Age*, 4, fig. 1.4, 30, fig. 1.7. For more on Wils's ground plan and its significance to Goltzius's *Circumcision*, see Bloom, "Mastering the Medium: Reference and Audience in Goltzius's Print of the *Circumcision*," 93, fig. 6; Gary Schwartz and Marten Jan Bok, *Pieter Saenredam: The Painter and His Time* (New York: Abbeville Press Publishers, 1989), 54, fig. 55.

<sup>101</sup> I would like to thank Mia Mochizuki for corresponding with me about the St. Bavo Church interior decoration and its Marian sculpture. I am grateful for the numerous sources she suggested to me about the statuary, and for her encouragement of my project. For a discussion of iconoclasm at the St. Bavo Church and its depiction in Fokke's print, see Mochizuki, *The Netherlandish Image after Iconoclasm, 1566-1672. Material Religion in the Dutch Golden Age*, 104-25.

<sup>102</sup> Hogenberg's print was part of a series of prints on the history of the Netherlands published in Aitsinger's *De Leone Belgico*. Michael Aitsinger, *De Leone Belgico* (Cologne: Gerard van Kempen, 1588). For the print, see also J. F. Heijbroek, ed., *Gescheidenis in Beeld* (Amsterdam: Rijksprentenkabinet, 2000), 68; Michalski, *The Reformation and the Visual Arts: The Protestant Image Question in Western and Eastern Europe*, 98; Mochizuki, *The Netherlandish Image after Iconoclasm, 1566-1672. Material Religion in the Dutch Golden Age*, 106-8; James Tanis and Daniel Horst, *Images of Discord: A Graphic Interpretation of the Opening Decades of the Eighty Years' War* (*De tweedracht verbeeld: Prentkunst als propaganda aan het*

can be seen in the Belgian Catholic churches of St. Martin's Cathedral in Ypres and the Groot Beguinhof in Leuven.

Given Goltzius's accurate rendering of the Brewers' Chapel and the nave beyond it, his Haarlem audience would have certainly recognized the setting of the *Circumcision* as the city's former Gothic cathedral. In the *Circumcision*, Goltzius produces a stark contrast between the pre-Reformation exemplar of Mary and the post-Reformation view of the St. Bavo Church. The print seems to collapse time by portraying the Calvinist church and Mary in the same composition, but also separates the two by enclosing Mary and the other figures within the walls of the Brewers' Chapel. The overall effect is one that calls attention to Mary's continued presence—both literal and spiritual—in the religiosity of Haarlemers after the Reformation. By positioning Mary in a recognizable Reformed place of worship that had once been used exclusively by Catholics, Goltzius boldly reminds his local viewers of their Catholic past, and he demonstrates the undiminished significance of Marian devotion for Dutch Calvinists.

On the basis of Goltzius's dedication of the Marian series to a Catholic duke and his resourceful use of the Brewers' Guild Chapel as a setting for the *Circumcision*, the intended potential audience for the *Life of the Virgin* must have included both Catholics and Protestants on an international as well as a local level. The sensitivity with which Goltzius accommodated the spiritual needs of both of the confessional groups as they pertained to Mary is evident in the scenes he selected

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*begin van te Tachtigjarige Oorlog*) (Bryn Mawr, PA, and Grand Rapids: Bryn Mawr College Library and William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1993).

from her life and his manner of their depiction. Scholars have not yet acknowledged Goltzius's remarkable re-fashioning of Marian iconography in this series for a multiconfessional audience. Because the Roman Catholic Church perpetuated the medieval cult of Mary, a major contributing factor for the Reformers' dissent from the Church earlier in the century, Goltzius's treatment of Mary deserves serious consideration.

The success of Goltzius's presentation of Mary for a multiconfessional audience in the *Life of the Virgin* series can be measured by comparing these prints to his earlier Marian images from the 1570s and 1580s. Flemish publishing houses headed by Philips Galle and others printed and sold all of his work in the Catholic city of Antwerp from this period of Goltzius's early career.<sup>103</sup> For that reason and perhaps also due to the likelihood of Goltzius's own Catholic faith, the rich corpus of Marian iconography he produced during these decades mainly evokes the post-Tridentine agenda to exalt the lives of the saints rather than strictly exploring Christological themes that had the Protestants' approval. An examination of Goltzius's Marian prints produced at the beginning of his artistic career reveals the ways in which he transformed Mary's identity for the later *Life of the Virgin* series from an exemplar appropriate for Catholic viewers into one that would reasonably suit Protestants as well.

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<sup>103</sup> Goltzius printed and published his prints in Antwerp until 1582 when he opened his own publishing house in Haarlem, which he managed until around 1600. For Goltzius's training, the Flemish publishers with whom he collaborated, and his Haarlem business, see Nadine Orenstein et al., "Print Publishers in the Netherlands, 1580-1620," in *Dawn of the Golden Age. Northern Netherlandish Art, 1580-1620*, 1993), 167-200.

### **Goltzius's Marian Prints before the 1593-94 *Life of the Virgin* Series**

Between roughly 1576 and 1586, Goltzius produced designs for four extant complex engravings that focus on Mary and the events of her life. They constitute his most significant Marian devotional prints that predate the *Life of the Virgin*. All of the scenes center on the theme of the Annunciation and Mary's early motherhood, and they all present Mary as part of a cycle on the Life of Christ or as a typology of Old Testament narratives.

In the first example, *Annunciation*, the opening print of six in the series entitled the *Life of Christ* (fig. 24), ca. 1578, published by Philips and Theodoor Galle in Antwerp, Mary's annunciation serves as the catalyst for Christ's Crucifixion.<sup>104</sup> The composition features Mary in an enclosed room kneeling before a book on a lectern with a basket of linens, scissors, with a chair placed in the foreground. Mary holds her hands in prayer with a white-oval halo behind her head and looks upward at the archangel Gabriel. The angel points toward a flowing fountain in the clouds. Mary reappears at the top of the fountain holding the Christ child. Two streams of liquid pour from their bodies into the fountain's basin. Above the mother and child is a dove symbolic of the Holy Ghost. The dove dramatically illuminates the entire scene with rays of light that penetrate through the clouds to the room below. Small vignettes of Mary's life from her Annunciation to Christ's Crucifixion decorate the frame around

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<sup>104</sup> E. K. J. Reznicek, *Die Zeichnungen des Hendrick Goltzius*, vol. 1, *Utrechtse Kunsthistorische Studien* (Utrecht: Haentjens, Dekker and Gumbert, 1961), 52; Walter L. Strauss, *Hendrick Goltzius, 1558-1617: The Complete Engravings and Woodcuts*, 2:66-67, cat. no. 23.



the central image. Interspersed between them are allegorical symbols of virtues and biblical passages to underscore Mary's purity and her role in the Incarnation.

Although none of the scenes from Mary's life in Goltzius's frame surrounding the *Annunciation* from the *Life of Christ* series originate from the New Testament Apocrypha, Protestants would likely have objected to Mary's position in the clouds. Her glowing figure in the sky evokes the traditional depiction in Roman Catholic art of her Assumption and subsequent coronation as Queen of Heaven after her apocryphal death. Calvinists may also have found the Ave Maria prayer inscribed beneath the image particularly discomfiting: "Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus Christ, amen."<sup>105</sup> The Ave Maria, or Hail Mary, prayer recited with a rosary, combines two greetings in Luke's gospel: Gabriel's annunciation to Mary, "Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women" (Luke 2:28), and Elizabeth's words to Mary, "Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb" (Luke 2:42).<sup>106</sup> While Martin Luther did not object to the Ave Maria prayer under the condition that devotees not recite it in order to venerate Mary but instead to praise her, John Calvin strongly opposed its usage.<sup>107</sup> Calvin's

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<sup>105</sup> "Ave Maria gratia plena, dominus tecum, benedicta tu in mulieribus, et benedictus fructus veatris tui Jesus Christus, amen."

<sup>106</sup> The prayer became widely spoken in England and the Netherlands because of Peter Damian who encouraged its usage before his death in 1072. After the Protestant Reformation, Pope Pius V recognized it with its addition, "Pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death." Warner, *Alone of All Her Sex: The Myth and the Cult of the Virgin Mary*, 306.

<sup>107</sup> For Luther and the Swiss reformer, Ulrich Zwingli, on the Ave Maria, see Heal, *The Cult of the Virgin Mary in Early Modern Germany: Protestant and*

adherence to the four Gospels in the New Testament as his sole source on Mary precluded him from interpreting the biblical references as anything but a greeting. In his *Commentarius in harmoniam evangelicam* (Commentary on a harmony of the evangelists), he wrote:

With excessively crass ignorance the papists have changed this greeting, as if by magic exorcism, into a kind of prayer (*preculam*), and [their] madness has so exploded that according to [their] preachers it is not permitted to ask in prayer for the grade of the Spirit except through their *Ave Maria*. Besides the fact that this is only a greeting, they usurp a task alien [to them], that God has entrusted only to the angel: Their arrogance is doubly stupid, for they greet someone who is absent!<sup>108</sup>

Calvin's unambiguous condemnation of the Ave Maria prayer suggests the strong likelihood that Calvinist viewers of Goltzius's engraving, the ca. 1578 *Annunciation*, would have objected to its inclusion as an inscription beneath the image.

Protestant viewers may also have reacted negatively to Mary's representation in the remaining three prints that Goltzius produced in his early career because they give precedence to Mary over Christ. In *Benedicta tu in mulieribus* (Blessed art thou among women) (fig. 25), engraved and published by Philips Galle in Antwerp, ca. 1578, Goltzius omits the corporeal figure of Christ from his composition. The artist only alludes to Christ's presence through the use of light surrounding the figure of Mary and the biblical text referring to her Annunciation. Mary forms the central axis

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*Catholic Piety, 1500-1648*, 62. On Lutheran sermons about the Ave Maria, see Beth Kreitzer, *Reforming Mary: Changing Images of the Virgin Mary in Lutheran Sermons of the Sixteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 55-64.

<sup>108</sup> Jean Calvin, *Commentarius in Harmoniam Evangelicam* (Brunswick: C. A. Schwetschke, 1891), col. 25. For the passage and Calvin's view of the Ave Maria, see George H. Tavard, *The Thousand Faces of the Virgin Mary* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1996), 124.

of the composition as an emblem of ideal motherhood with six biblical mothers surrounding her.<sup>109</sup>

For a broad, diverse audience, *Benedicta tu in mulieribus* articulates Mary's post-Tridentine identity as the Mother of God. In addition, as Yvonne Bleyerveld has argued, the print also presents the concept of fertility and pregnancy as a reward for moral behavior that could provide a source of comfort to the print's female viewers.<sup>110</sup> Mary emphasizes the divine gift of her motherhood by touching the tips of her fingers together in a pose of prayer as she looks upward through her aureole toward a dove suspended over her head symbolizing the Holy Ghost. Standing on either side of Mary, in a nondescript setting with their names inscribed near their heads are, from left to right, six mothers from the Old Testament: Eve, Sarah, Leah, Rachel, Samson's mother (who is not named in the scripture), Hannah, and one from the New Testament, Mary's cousin Elizabeth.<sup>111</sup> Small babies hover over the women around Mary to underscore their mutual bond of motherhood. Grapes and other fruit, sheaths of wheat, and roses, which sprout from a fountain in a clouded sky, shower upon the entire group and reflect the meaning of the print's Latin inscription taken from Ezekiel 34:26: "And I will make them and the places round my hill a blessing;

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<sup>109</sup> Strauss, *Hendrick Goltzius, 1558-1617: The Complete Engravings and Woodcuts*, 90-91, cat. no. 37.

<sup>110</sup> For a discussion of this image in the context of biblical figures depicted in Northern European prints as moral exemplars, see Yvonne Bleyerveld, "Chaste, Obedient and Devout: Biblical Women as Patterns of Female Virtue in Netherlandish and German Graphic Art, ca. 1500-1750," 230-33.

<sup>111</sup> Strauss incorrectly identifies Hannah as St. Anne, which wrongly implies that she is the mother of Mary. Strauss, *Hendrick Goltzius, 1558-1617: The Complete Engravings and Woodcuts*, 90.

and I will cause the shower to come down in his season; there shall be showers of blessing.”<sup>112</sup> The blessing of pregnancy alluded to in the inscription becomes clear in the blocks of text framing the composition pertaining to each of the seven mothers and the biblical passages that Galle inscribed in ornate cartouches between them.<sup>113</sup> The incorporation of Old Testament women as prefigurations of Mary would likely have appealed to Protestant viewers with a thorough knowledge of Scripture and the common perception of Mary as the “new Eve.”<sup>114</sup> However, the absence of a narrative in the print’s composition borne directly out of the Bible suggests that its intended viewers were probably comprised of Catholics, not Calvinists, given the latter’s adherence to the literal words of the Bible.<sup>115</sup>

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<sup>112</sup> Et ponam eos in circuitu collis mei benedictionem, et deducam imbrem in tempore suo, bluuia b[e]nedictionis erunt.

<sup>113</sup> The texts read counterclockwise from the upper-left corner beginning with Eve to the upper center ending with the Virgin Mary: Heva (Eve), Genesis 1; Sara (Sarah), Genesis 18; Lia (Leah), Genesis 29; Rachel, Genesis 30; Mater Saso (Samson’s mother), Judges 13; Anna (Hannah), I Samuel 1; Elisabeth (Elizabeth), Luke 1; and the lunette that contains no name but refers to the Virgin Mary over the upper center inscription, “Benedicta tu in mulieribus,” Luke 1. Other biblical inscriptions placed between the blocks of text in the frame about each woman emphasize virtues, which include piety, obedience, and chastity. The inscriptions derive from the Old Testament (Deuteronomy, Ecclesiastes, Galatians, Jeremiah, Proverbs, and Psalms), and the New Testament (Matthew and John). Bleyerveld, “Chaste, Obedient and Devout: Biblical Women as Patterns of Female Virtue in Netherlandish and German Graphic Art, ca. 1500-1750,” 230, 232.

<sup>114</sup> On the association of Mary with Eve in the history art, see H. Diane Russell, *Eva/Ave: Woman in Renaissance and Baroque Prints* (Washington, DC, and New York: National Gallery of Art and Feminist Press at the City University of New York, 1990).

<sup>115</sup> For the Netherlandish print tradition of Old and New Testament iconography combined into single scenes and series for Catholic and Protestant audiences, see Peter van der Coelen, “Netherlandish Printmakers and The Old Testament,” esp. 8-21.

The final two prints from Goltzius's early career also focus on Mary's Annunciation and have a conspicuous absence of Christ in their scenes. The artist gave precedence to Mary over Christ in the scenes in a manner that would not have appealed to Protestants. In the first print, *Six Prophets of the Annunciation* (fig. 26), ca. 1580, Goltzius emulates the grandiose display of prophets, God, the Holy Ghost, and Gabriel's pronouncement to Mary in the engraving by Cornelis Cort after Federico Zuccaro, *Annunciation with Prophets* (fig. 27), 1571.<sup>116</sup> In the foreground of his print, Goltzius represents six prophets holding tablets and scrolls imprinted with their predictions: (from left to right) Isaiah, David, Moses, Jeremiah, Solomon, and Haggai.<sup>117</sup> Isaiah holds a scroll referring to his prophecy of a virgin birth (Isaiah 7:14): "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."<sup>118</sup> Mary and Gabriel enact the Annunciation in a lavish garden in the background behind the prophets while God, the Holy Ghost and a multitude of angels bear witness to the event from the clouds overhead. The representation of God as a human being immediately

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<sup>116</sup> On Goltzius's print after Cort, see Luijten et al., eds., *Dawn of the Golden Age. Northern Netherlandish Art, 1580-1620*, 366. See also Johan Catharinus Justus Bierens de Haan, *L'oeuvre gravé de Cornelis Cort, graveur hollandais, 1533-1578* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1948), cat. no. 26.

<sup>117</sup> Strauss explains that allegories of the Virgin and Christ are depicted throughout the landscape in the background of the image. At the left Goltzius depicts symbols of Mary: a moon, cedar tree, cypress tree, snake, lizard, well, fountain, tall tower, and an arched structure Strauss identifies as a portal. At the right are emblems of Christ: the sun, a palm tree, olive tree, roses, lilies, a fenced garden, and a domed structure with columns that Strauss describes as a sanctuary. Strauss, *Hendrick Goltzius, 1558-1617: The Complete Engravings and Woodcuts*, cat. no. 141.

<sup>118</sup> The text inscribed on the scroll reads: "Ecce virgo concipiet / et pariet filium. / Isa. VII."

signals that this print would have been entirely unacceptable to Protestants. Calvin in particular prohibited the visual portrayal of God in corporeal form. As Mia Mochizuki has shown, Calvin's position that God should not be represented in human form led to a flourishing genre of text paintings of the Ten Commandments used for the decoration of Dutch Reformed churches.<sup>119</sup>

Goltzius produced a second print that predated the *Life of the Virgin* series. In *The Annunciation to Mary* (fig. 28), 1586, from the series of six prints, *The Annunciations of the Bible*, the artist contextualizes the dramatic scene of Mary's Annunciation within the larger scope of similar miraculous pregnancies experienced by women in the Old Testament. Rather than focusing exclusively on the lives of Mary and Christ as he did later in the *Life of the Virgin*, the earlier series presents the Virgin as an heir to the matriarchs of the Old Testament.<sup>120</sup> The remaining five prints in this series represent Old Testament scenes, such as *The Annunciation of Samson's Birth* (fig. 29), engraved by Goltzius in 1586, which provided Mary only a minor role.

In contrast to these earlier series of Old and New Testament Annunciations, Goltzius's 1593-94 *Life of the Virgin* series focuses on one biblical personage as opposed to a theme. By closely examining Mary as a singular woman rather than situating her as one among the pantheon of Old and New Testament figures, he

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<sup>119</sup> See the previously cited publications by Mochizuki that all examine the production and installation of text paintings in Reformed Churches. For a summary of Calvin's stance on visual imagery of God as a human, see Mia M. Mochizuki, "Supplanting the Devotional Image after Netherlandish Iconoclasm," 141-43.

<sup>120</sup> The inscription reads: "Alloquitur Mariam Gabriel demissus Olympo, Virgo Deum paries summo dilecta Tonanti." For this series, see Van der Coelen, "Netherlandish Printmakers and The Old Testament," 106-7, cat. nos. 26.1-6.

strengthens the devotional character of the series. The viewer can more easily contemplate the sequence of separate events in Mary's life that eventually led to the period of Christ's adulthood, death, and afterlife, rather than relating Mary to broad biblical subjects, such as miraculous pregnancies or motherhood.

Goltzius's decision to include the specific six episodes of Mary's life from her Annunciation to the Flight into Egypt significantly amplifies discussion of his desire to emulate and surpass the work of his predecessors and contemporaries. Given Goltzius's longstanding interest in depicting scenes from Mary's life in prints that predate those in the *Life of the Virgin*, his motivation to draw upon models by earlier artists, including Albrecht Dürer, probably informed his choice to produce the series. Thus, although scholars have methodically demonstrated the pictorial models Goltzius appropriated for each of his prints, they have not situated the *Life of the Virgin* series within the context of Goltzius's earlier Marian prints or within the larger German and Netherlandish tradition of thematic presentation of Mary's life.

### **The "Life of the Virgin" Theme in German and Netherlandish Prints**

Print series depicting Mary's life were in wide circulation in sixteenth-century Northern Europe long before Goltzius began his *Life of the Virgin*. Indeed, scholars have rightly noted that Goltzius knew of at least two such series, one by Albrecht Dürer, and one by Jan Sadeler, given the overt similarities in his *Circumcision* to the

same scene in the respective series by the latter two artists.<sup>121</sup> Yet even though Goltzius clearly emulated the work by Dürer and Sadeler, as evidenced by his compositional arrangement, figures, and poses, he also noticeably diverged from them in his choices of scenes.

Goltzius altered Mary's typical representation in his series by distilling the extensive corpus of images of the Virgin's life to only the pertinent episodes from the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. He disregarded all of the events often selected by other artists from the New Testament Apocrypha, such as Jacobus de Voragine's *Legenda aurea* (Golden Legend) from 1255-66.<sup>122</sup> He also rejected images that deviated from the accounts of Mary's life in the Gospels. Thus, while Goltzius clearly wanted viewers of his *Life of the Virgin* to take notice of his emulation of earlier masters, his series is no mere exercise in the artistic practice of *aemulatio*.

The numerous extant representations of Mary's life by Dürer and others certainly provided Goltzius with models for the *Life of the Virgin*. None of these works, however, render Mary or the events of her life in a manner that would have appealed to a wide market of Protestant viewers. Their rich vocabulary of Marian iconography may have provided Goltzius with a foundation for his *Life of the Virgin* series, yet by distilling the Virgin's life to only the episodes narrated in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke his series functioned as a pious exegesis of the Bible unlike those

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<sup>121</sup> Bloom, "Mastering the Medium: Reference and Audience in Goltzius's Print of the *Circumcision*," 78-103.

<sup>122</sup> For the detailed accounts of Mary's life in the *Legenda aurea*, see Jacobus de Voragine, *The Golden Legend: Readings on the Saints*, trans. William Granger Ryan, 2 vols. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993).



produced by his predecessors and contemporaries. I argue that Goltzius portrayed Mary in a manner similar to, but not exactly like, those of his predecessors deliberately to innovate her as a theme appropriate for the widest audience possible.

Among the primary pictorial precedents and partial sources for Goltzius's series were Albrecht Dürer's woodcuts in his series, the *Life of the Virgin*, 1502-11. Dürer's print cycle provides one of the largest and best-known visual descriptions of Mary's life by a Northern European artist of the sixteenth century.<sup>123</sup> In the twenty-sheet suite, Dürer portrays Mary in an impressive variety of episodes from a combination of the New Testament Apocrypha and New Testament Gospels that Goltzius also could have portrayed *in toto*. While all six of the scenes in Goltzius's series also appear in the suite by Dürer, Goltzius only drew from Dürer's images that represent Mary's motherhood and her earthly, humble identity that Protestants deemed acceptable. As Giulia Bartrum has observed, Protestant Reformers rejected

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<sup>123</sup> Benedict Schwalbe (Benedictus Chelidonius), a Benedictine theologian from the monastery of St. Egidien in Nuremberg, provided the Latin inscriptions on Dürer's series. Each of the prints measures approximately 30 x 21 cm. In addition to the title page, the series includes the following scenes: the *Refusal of Joachim's Offer*, the *Angel Appearing to Joachim*, the *Meeting of Joachim and Anne at the Golden Gate*, the *Birth of the Virgin*, the *Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple*, the *Marriage of the Virgin*, the *Annunciation*, the *Visitation*, the *Adoration of the Shepherds*, the *Circumcision*, the *Adoration of the Magi*, the *Presentation of Christ in the Temple*, the *Flight into Egypt*, the *Rest during the Flight to Egypt*, *Christ among the Doctors in the Temple*, *Christ Taking Leave of his Mother*, the *Virgin Worshipped by Angels and Saints*, the *Death of the Virgin*, and the *Coronation of the Virgin*. For the series, see Giulia Bartrum, *Albrecht Dürer and his Legacy: The Graphic Work of a Renaissance Artist* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), 135, 145-46, 164, 173-74, 239, 247-49, 281, cat. nos. 80, 117, 185, 200, 204, 239; Peter Strieder, *Albrecht Dürer: Paintings, Prints, Drawings*, trans. Nancy M. Gordon and Walter L. Strauss (New York: Abaris Books, 1982), 268-71.

imagery by artists that depicted those same events from Dürer's series that were derived from the New Testament Apocrypha.<sup>124</sup>

Goltzius's iconographic deviations from Dürer's series all seem aimed at making the narrative of Mary's life palatable for Protestant audiences while remaining appealing to Catholics as well. His departure from Dürer's series begins with his title page. Goltzius began his series with the scene of Mary's Annunciation from Luke's gospel rather than the first print in Dürer's series of the Immaculate Conception (fig. 30), the iconography of which does not appear in the New Testament.<sup>125</sup> Goltzius also rejected the next group of sheets in Dürer's series that recount the legend of Mary's parents, Anne and Joachim, such as the *Meeting of Joachim and Anne at the Golden Gate* (fig. 31), 1504. Furthermore, Goltzius omits events of Mary's childhood that appear in Dürer's series, including the scene of her birth (fig. 32), her presentation as a young girl in the temple, and her marriage. In contrast, Goltzius opens his series with the events that appear in the middle of Dürer's sequence: the *Annunciation* (fig. 33), ca. 1500-2, *Visitation* (fig. 34), 1505, *Adoration of the Shepherds* (fig. 35), ca. 1504-5, *Adoration of the Magi* (fig. 36), ca. 1501-2, *Circumcision* (Figure 15), 1505, and *Rest on the Flight into Egypt* (fig. 37), ca. 1504-5. Goltzius omits the rest of Dürer's representation of the episodes from Christ's childhood, including the Presentation in the Temple; the most vexing scenes for

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<sup>124</sup> Bartrum, *Albrecht Dürer and his Legacy: The Graphic Work of a Renaissance Artist*, 239.

<sup>125</sup> On the doctrine and dogma of the Immaculate Conception, see Graef, *Mary: A History of Doctrine and Devotion*, 7, 11, 15, 18, 24; Warner, *Alone of All Her Sex: The Myth and the Cult of the Virgin Mary*, 236-54.

Protestant reformers—Mary’s death (fig. 38), 1510; and her subsequent coronation as Queen of Heaven (fig. 39), 1510. Goltzius’s inclusion of specific subjects from Dürer’s series at the same time that, according to Van Mander, he used the artistic precedent as a compositional and thematic model, underscores his strategy to re-fashion Mary’s pictorial identity in accordance with Tridentine *and* Calvinist doctrine.

Following the model provided by Dürer, other German artists also depicted Mary’s life in print with scenes taken from a combination of the New Testament Gospels and the New Testament Apocrypha. Goltzius’s conspicuous deviation from such precedents calls attention to his competitive spirit and the pictorial transformation he made of Mary’s identity that successfully accommodated shifting theological ideologies after the Reformation. The most notable print series inspired by Dürer’s precedent, Albrecht Altdorfer’s forty woodcuts, *Fall and Redemption of the Human Race*, ca. 1513, circulated in the decades before Goltzius engraved his series.<sup>126</sup> Following the model provided by Dürer two years earlier, Altdorfer began his suite with a portrait of the Immaculate Conception. In the title sheet, *Mary on a Crescent* (fig. 40), Mary holds the child and stands on an inverted sickle moon with a large mandorla glowing behind her as two angels hold a crown over her head to

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<sup>126</sup> The small woodcuts each measure approximately 7.2 x 4.8 cm. Jacqueline Guillaud and Maurice Guillaud, eds., *Altdorfer and Fantastic Realism in German Art* (Paris and New York: Guillaud Editions and Rizzoli, 1985), 87-92, cat. nos. 61-102; Charles W. Talbot and Alan Shestack, *Prints and Drawings of the Danube School: An Exhibition of South German and Austrian Graphic Art of 1500 to 1560* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1969), 40-42, cat. nos. 28-35; Franz Winzinger, *Albrecht Altdorfer. Graphik, Holzschnitte, Kupferstiche, Radierungen* (Munich: Piper, 1963), 65-69, cat. nos. 25-64.

signify her coronation in heaven. The series continues with episodes of Adam and Eve being expelled from Eden, followed by events from the lives of Mary's parents, Anne and Joachim. Episodes from Mary's life and Christ's Passion complete the series, which culminates with an image of Mary's death (fig. 41) before the final scene of Judgment Day. Although the compositions of Altdorfer's woodcuts do not resemble those under discussion by Goltzius, the Haarlem artist either could have known the series given the collectible nature of prints, or at a minimum, he could have been aware of the conventional way in which artists often portrayed Mary's life as typified by Altdorfer.

Another example of a series that draws from Dürer's *Life of the Virgin* is the cycle by Jan Sadeler, Wilhelm V's court printmaker and a chief competitor of Goltzius. The twelve sheets in Sadeler's series, *Childhood of Christ*, 1579-82, all of which he based on drawings by Maarten de Vos, include: the *Annunciation* (fig. 42), 1579, the *Visitation* (Figure 13), 1582, the *Nativity* (fig. 43), 1582, the *Annunciation to the Shepherds*, 1579, the *Circumcision* (fig. 44), 1581, the *Adoration of the Magi* (fig. 45), 1581, the *Presentation in the Temple*, 1580, the *Flight into Egypt*, ca. 1579-82, the *Massacre of the Innocents*, ca. 1579-82, the *Holy Family in Egypt Served by Angels* (fig. 46), 1581, the *Holy Family in a Boat on their way to Nazareth*, 1582, and the *Dispute in the Temple*, 1582. Although Sadeler clearly based his series on Dürer's model given the overt similarities among some of their compositions, Sadeler's suite

derives only from the New Testament Gospels, and thus might have been Goltzius's strongest source of inspiration.<sup>127</sup>

As scholars have demonstrated, Goltzius's *Life of the Virgin* emulates parts of Sadeler's series, particularly the *Circumcision*. This print more closely resembles the version by Sadeler than that by Dürer.<sup>128</sup> Despite some similarities in subjects and compositions between the two series, however, Goltzius breaks from the precedent of his Netherlandish counterpart by providing a more accurate pictorial resolution to the biblical narrative. Even though Sadeler's episodes all derive to some extent from the New Testament Gospels, he takes considerable liberties with the textual source in his portrayal of two of the final scenes: the *Holy Family in Egypt Served by Angels*, and the *Holy Family in a Boat on Their Way to Nazareth* (Matthew 3:23). The Gospels do not provide information about the Holy Family in a domestic setting surrounded by angels as depicted in Sadeler's first print, nor do they describe the family's return from Egypt in a boat as represented in the second. Goltzius's series, therefore, provides a more accurate visual record of Mary's life than does that of Sadeler, which would meet the expectations and appreciation of Protestant viewers more than the Catholic audiences to whom Sadeler catered.

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<sup>127</sup> The images in Sadeler's series each measure approximately 10 x 13 cm. The series is also referred to in the scholarship as the *Life of Christ* and the *Youth of Christ*. Ramaix, *The Illustrated Bartsch: Johan Sadeler I*, 1:148-54, cat. nos. 7001.130-41; Hollstein, *Dutch and Flemish Etchings, Engravings, and Woodcuts, ca. 1450-1700*, 64-66, nos. 256-67. See also Annette Weber, "Bildvorlagen für eine Serie Augsburger Silberreliefs," *Städel-Jahrbuch* 11 (1987): 225-40; J. M. Gonzales de Zarate, "Las estampas de los Sadeler como Transmisoras de modelos iconográficos en la pintura flamenca del siglo XVII," *Goya: Revista de arte* 251 (1996): 265-75.

<sup>128</sup> Refer to the previously cited sources on Sadeler's influence on Goltzius.

Given the collectible nature of prints and his awareness of Sadeler's *Childhood of Christ* series, Goltzius probably also knew other print series by Jan Sadeler of Mary's life, which scholars have not yet acknowledged. In light of the evolving discourse of imitation and emulation between the two artists, a full understanding of Goltzius's innovations in the *Life of the Virgin* series warrants a consideration of Sadeler's other work. For example, Jan Sadeler and his brother, Raphael Sadeler, engraved the long sequence of prints, *Mysteries of the Rosary* (figs. 47-50), after lost drawings by Maarten de Vos, ca. 1587. Goltzius could have seen this series during his visit with Sadeler in 1590 in Munich. Similar to Dürer's series produced more than seventy years earlier, the sequence by the Sadeler brothers provides a prototypical, conventionally Roman Catholic description of Mary's life, which includes episodes following her death as described in the apocryphal legends.<sup>129</sup> Although the series begins with scenes from Mary's early motherhood, as does Goltzius's sequence, including the *Annunciation* (fig. 47) and the *Visitation* (fig. 48), it concludes with traditional scenes from the New Testament Apocrypha that include the *Assumption of the Virgin* (fig. 49) and the *Coronation of the Virgin* (fig. 50). Their inclusion in Sadeler's series underscores Goltzius's inventive departure

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<sup>129</sup> Scholars also refer to the series as *Scenes from the Life and Passion of Christ and of the Virgin*. Each of the prints measure approximately 19.5 x 14.7 cm. Ramaix, *The Illustrated Bartsch: Johan Sadeler I*, 4:123-38, cat. nos. 7003.093-107; Alfred von Wurzbach, *Niederländisches Künstler-Lexikon, auf grund archivalischer Forschungen bis auf die neueste Zeit bearbeitet*, ed. B. M. Israël (Vienna and Leipzig: Halm and Goldmann, 1906-11), nos. 58.1-58.15. See also Ruth Edquist, *Sadeler Catalogue* (Parkville, Australia: University of Melbourne Library, 1990), 138, cat. no. 75a.

from Roman Catholic iconography in that he focused solely on the narratives in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke.

After his stay in Italy, Goltzius may have also seen Jan Sadeler's in-progress works on his return to Haarlem through Munich. One of Sadeler's most complex projects depicts fifteen scenes from Mary's life in a single large-scale engraving, *Madonna and Child on a Crescent Moon (Immaculate Conception)* (fig. 51), published in 1593—the same year Goltzius began his series.<sup>130</sup> Modeled after a design by Maarten de Vos, the print depicts circular vignettes of the life of Mary and Christ's passion that create a rosary around the Immaculate Conception in the center of the composition. The small scenes, which are read counter-clockwise around the Virgin starting at the upper left, begin with the early events of Mary's life and end at the upper right with an image of her coronation in heaven. Although Goltzius included several of the same episodes in the *Life of the Virgin* series, he purposefully disassociated his cycle from Mary's apocryphal Assumption so as to focus on her earthly life.

In addition to the prints by Sadeler and his studio, Goltzius could have also known and discarded many other traditionally conceived Roman Catholic representations of Mary. The two prints, for example, the *Death of the Virgin* after Cornelis Cort and Federico Zuccaro (fig. 52), published after 1567, and the *Death of the Virgin* after Maarten de Vos (fig. 53), 1576, both portray the event of Mary's death succeeded by her coronation in heaven. The event, popular in medieval

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<sup>130</sup> Ramaix, *The Illustrated Bartsch: Johan Sadeler I*, 3:233, cat. no. 7002.038.

religiosity, is narrated in the New Testament Apocrypha but not in the Gospels, and was thus rejected by Protestants.

Since Goltzius did not create prints that revisited the subject of Mary's life after 1594, we can conclude that the six episodes he portrayed from Mary's motherhood represent the complete series. Moreover, since no Marian apocryphal imagery is extant in his *oeuvre*, his adherence to the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, in compliance with Tridentine and Calvinist doctrine, strongly suggests that the series functioned as devotional imagery embraced by both Catholic and Protestant audiences, as well as a demonstration of his artistic virtuosity for *liefhebbers*—those who collected art and were knowledgeable about it.

### **The Multiconfessional Context and Reception of Goltzius's *Life of the Virgin***

Early seventeenth-century documents about Goltzius's *Life of the Virgin* series from the decades following its production reveal much about its favorable reception by prominent Dutch Catholics and Protestants. Members of both confessional groups held the series in high regard for its religious meaning *and* its demonstration of artistic skill, which suggests that the series functioned for the two groups as both devotional prints and collectors' items. The ardent Catholic, Joost van den Vondel, composed a laudatory poem around 1646 for Diedrick Matham, Goltzius's grandson, in which he describes the artist's gravestone and his laudable output of religious imagery:



Your holy steel and your hand  
 Break hearts, hard as diamond.  
 . . . . .  
 No one engraved the Cross and Crib,  
 So accurately and decoratively,  
 . . . . .  
 His mother honors you with a wreath.  
 She is the same who met her cousin,  
 And heard the Archangel greet  
 On your gravestone, receive no honor  
 If her son rewards again  
 Ten thousand fold in another life.  
 That is how your art will be elevated in the end.<sup>131</sup>

Vondel makes specific references in his poem to Goltzius's depiction of Mary in the *Life of the Virgin* and reverently suggests that the Virgin herself will bestow glory upon the artist for his series.

Seventeenth-century Dutch Calvinists praised Goltzius's *Life of the Virgin* series for its pious theme as well as the artistic virtuosity that it manifested.

Constantijn Huygens, the Calvinist secretary to the *stadholder*, Frederick Hendrick, commended Goltzius for his suite of prints in a diary entry written between 1629 and 1631. Huygens described the subject of the series as the "Birth of the Lord," presumably so that a Christological, as opposed to a Marian, interpretation of it could permit him to extol the prints in a manner that would not come into conflict with his

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<sup>131</sup> "Uw heiligh yzer en uw hant / Breeckt harten, hardt als diamant. / . . . Geen mensch vergolt u Kruis en Kribbe, / Zoo rijckelijck en net gesneên, / . . . Zijn moeder eert u met een' krans. / De zelve, die haer Nicht gemoete, / En hoorde des Aertsengels groete / In uwe plaet, ontfangt geen eer / Of haere vrucht beloontze weêr / Tien duizentvout in 't ander leven. / Zoo wort uw Kunst in 't endt verheven." The poem is entitled, "De Zerck Van Henrick Goltzius. Aen Diedrick Matham." J. F. M. et al. Sterck, ed., *De werken van Vondel* (Amsterdam: Wereldbibliotheek, 1927-40), 5:503-4. I am grateful to Rebecca van Beem for her help in translating some of this poem. For a translation of part of the poem, see Leeftang and Luijten, *Hendrick Goltzius (1558-1617): Drawings, Prints and Paintings*, 21, 322 n. 54.

Calvinist convictions.<sup>132</sup> Huygens went on to commend Goltzius's emulation of earlier artists in his series, writing: "[T]he depths of his wonderful genius . . . what is characteristic of Albrecht Dürer and Lucas van Leyden, those unparalleled geniuses, he has expressed so keenly in these works as to make one believe that these artists have returned to the world in him."<sup>133</sup> The praise bestowed upon the *Life of the Virgin* series by Vondel and Huygens provides important evidence of its popularity within both Dutch Catholic and Protestant circles in the first half of the seventeenth century and suggests that members of both religious groups may have valued it for devotional purposes.

### **Devotion to Mary at the St. Bavo Church**

Goltzius published the *Life of the Virgin* series during a period in Haarlem's history in which the city's Calvinist political and religious authorities maintained a high level of tolerance toward its resident Catholics.<sup>134</sup> The relatively peaceful

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<sup>132</sup> Leeflang and Luijten, *Hendrick Goltzius (1558-1617): Drawings, Prints and Paintings*, 322 n. 54.

<sup>133</sup> Constantijn Huygens and Chris L. Heesakkers, *Mijn jeugd*, trans. Chris L. Heesakkers (Amsterdam: Querido, 1987), 77-78. The passage is quoted in Ilja M. Veldman, *Images for the Eye and Soul: Function and Meaning in Netherlandish Prints (1450-1650)* (Leiden: Primavera Pers, 2006), 34-35. See also Cornelis Bart and Jan Piet Filedt Kok, "The Taste for Lucas van Leyden Prints," *Simiolus* 26, no. 1-2 (1998): 37; Van der Coelen, *Rembrandts passie. Het Nieuwe Testament in de Nederlandse prentkunst van de zestiende en zeventiende eeuw*, 55.

<sup>134</sup> On the coexistence of Catholics and Protestants in Haarlem after the Reformation, see Bueren, *Tot lof van Haarlem. Het beleid van de stad Haarlem ten aanzien van de kunstwerken uit geconfisqueerde geestelijke instellingen*; Frima Fox Hofrichter, Egbert Haverkamp-Begemann, and J. J. Temminck, *Haarlem: The Seventeenth Century* (New Brunswick: The Jane Voorhees Zimmerli Art Museum, Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, 1983); Luttikhuisen, "The Art of

coexistence of Haarlem's confessional groups and their desire to preserve the memory of the city's pre-Reformation, Roman Catholic religious heritage is demonstrated especially in the dedications to various Catholic saints in the St. Bavo Church that were maintained even after it was reconsecrated as the Calvinist, Grote Kerk. Mia Mochizuki posits in her thorough study of the St. Bavo Church that the main devotional figure for the church's worshippers in the late medieval period was Mary; Christ and St. Bavo followed Mary in significance. She records that the church contained no fewer than six sculptures of Mary and additional dedications to her at the high altar and in a chapel.<sup>135</sup> The Calvinist Reformed Church's safeguarding of pre-Reformation paintings, altars, and chapel dedications in the church is compelling evidence that both the Catholics *and* Calvinists of Haarlem would have embraced the Marian subject of Goltzius's *Life of the Virgin* series.

Of the chapels in the St. Bavo Church that remained dedicated to popular Catholic saints after iconoclasm and the church's reconsecration, the one focused on Mary is especially remarkable. The chapel, located in the north transept, is clearly marked in the detailed ground plan of the church drawn by Pieter Wils for Van Ampzing's 1628 history of Haarlem. Wils labeled the chapel with the letter "D" and the text: *altaar van de maagd Maria* (altar of the Virgin Mary) (fig. 54); still today, it

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Devotion in Haarlem Before and After the Introduction of Calvinism," 281-99. Mia M. Mochizuki, "The Reformation of Devotional Art and the Great Church in Haarlem"; Spaans, *Haarlem na de Reformatie. Stedelijke cultuur en kerkelijk leven, 1577-1620*.

<sup>135</sup> Mochizuki, *The Netherlandish Image after Iconoclasm, 1566-1672. Material Religion in the Dutch Golden Age*, 84 n. 7.

remains dedicated to Mary.<sup>136</sup> Also called the Chapel of the Guild of Our Lady of the Seven Sorrows, the room is located across the aisle from the copper choir screen, which represented the culmination of the devotee's spiritual journey to the high altar.<sup>137</sup> Beyond the choir at the opposite side of the nave from the Marian chapel was the *de Sakristij van de Vikarissen* (Vicars' Sacristy) that is adjacent to both the Brewers' Chapel and its small, private office. The literal proximity of the Brewers' Chapel to the Chapel of the Seven Sorrows provides a compelling point of adjacency between Mary and the Brewers' Guild that Goltzius depicts in his *Circumcision*.

Other Marian objects and dedications existed in the St. Bavo Church after the period of iconoclasm and the church's reconsecration. The Christmas Chapel, which is located next to the Chapel of the Seven Sorrows and directly across the nave from the Brewers' Chapel, pertains to Mary given her obvious, central role in the birth of Christ. On the ground plan drawn by Wils, the chapel is labeled with the letter "C" and the text: *altaar van Christus geboorte, van 't kersgild* (altar of the birth of Christ, of the Christmas Guild) (Figure 54). The Christmas Guild, comprised of Haarlem's

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<sup>136</sup> The full inscription in the chapel reads: "altaar van de maagd Maria, en de grafstede van de Broukhorsten / Schagens kapel." The legend in the upper right corner of the sheet along the south side of the nave lists the chapel as "D. Schagens kapel." The name "Broukhorsten" refers to the last name of the individual buried in the chapel. I am grateful to Rebecca van Beem for consulting with me about the inscriptions in the ground plan. For the chapel, see also Hugo Franciscus van Heussen, *Oudheden en gestichten van Kennemerland, Amstelland, Noordholland: en Westveriesland; behelzende de oudheden, opkomste en benaminge der steden Haarlem, Alkmaar, Amsterdam. . . .* (Leiden: Christiaan Vermey, 1721), fol. 21; Jacob Johannes Graaf, "Plaatsbeschrijving der S. Bavo-kerk te Haarlem." *Bijdragen voor de geschiedenis van het Bisdom Haarlem* 4 (1876): 50-51.

<sup>137</sup> On the naming of the chapels after patrons saints and guilds, see Mochizuki, *The Netherlandish Image after Iconoclasm, 1566-1672. Material Religion in the Dutch Golden Age*, 39.

wealthiest citizens, including Goltzius's wife and her son, Jacob Matham, remained active through the Reformation and still exists today.<sup>138</sup> During the years Goltzius lived in Haarlem and produced the *Life of the Virgin*, this confraternity, which venerated both Mary and the Christ child, continued to support its chapel.<sup>139</sup>

After worshipping in the Christmas Chapel, the celebrant could have exited and turned left to walk down the nave toward the end of the apse, and then stopped to pray at a life-size sculpture of Mary. The figure, produced by Herpert Lieven Meinaertsz and painted by Symon van Waterlant in ca. 1453, was attached to the north column behind the high altar, which Wils labeled with the number "4" on his ground plan.<sup>140</sup> The high altar itself, as Mia Mochizuki explains, probably alternated in its dedication into the seventeenth century between Mary and St. Bavo until, it was ultimately named in honor of Our Lady of Ascension.<sup>141</sup> The abundance of reminders of pre-Reformation devotion to Mary inside the St. Bavo Church for post-

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<sup>138</sup> After the reconsecration of the St. Bavo Church, the Christmas Guild moved its annual banquet from their chapel to the Prinsenhof. McGee, *Cornelis Corneliszoon van Haarlem (1562-1638). Patrons, friends and Dutch humanists*, 45.

<sup>139</sup> For a description of the Christmas Guild and its celebration of the Last Summer at Christmas, see Graaf, "Plaatsbeschrijving der S. Bavo-kerk te Haarlem," 47-50; Mochizuki, *The Netherlandish Image after Iconoclasm, 1566-1672. Material Religion in the Dutch Golden Age*, 88 n. 33, 92 n. 62; A. F. O. van Sasse van Ysselt, *Beschrijving van het H. Kerstmisgilde te Haarlem* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1905); H. F. Heerkens Thijssen, *Korte geschiedenis van het Heilig Kerstmisgilde te Haarlem* (Haarlem: Enschedé, 1942).

<sup>140</sup> Mochizuki, *The Netherlandish Image after Iconoclasm, 1566-1672. Material Religion in the Dutch Golden Age*, 66.

<sup>141</sup> Multiple dedications for altars have been common in Christian church history. For a discussion of the high altar's dedication at the St. Bavo Church, see *Ibid.* See also Jacob Johannes Graaf, "Plaatsbeschrijving der S. Bavo-kerk te Haarlem," *Bijdragen voor de geschiedenis van het Bisdom Haarlem* 4 (1876): 15-16.

Reformation devotees underscores the long-lived embrace by the Calvinist *and* Catholic Haarlemers of the traditionally Catholic exemplar.

In addition to the church's two Marian chapels, a sculpture of the Virgin and child decorated the northern façade of the St. Bavo Church before *and* after iconoclasm and the church's reconsecration. Attributed to Dirck Jacobsz from 1496, *Virgin with Child* greeted visitors entering the church near its two chapels dedicated to Mary (fig. 55).<sup>142</sup> The Marian statue continued to adorn the church's exterior until 1847, which underscores the relationship with the Virgin that Haarlem Calvinists maintained, or at least did not outright reject, prior to and during the years that Goltzius engraved the *Life of the Virgin*.<sup>143</sup>

Wils marks additional places on the ground plan in which altars and paintings bear dedications to other saints, including: Catherine, Eligius, Andrew, Joseph, John the Baptist, Christopher, and of course, Bavo, the seventh-century Benedictine monk to whom the cathedral was dedicated. Of all of the parts of the St. Bavo Church that were dedicated to saints, its Marian chapel is perhaps the most intriguing given its continued presence. The altar and the dedication to Mary indicate that Calvinist

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<sup>142</sup> On this sculpture of the Virgin and child, see Mochizuki, *The Netherlandish Image after Iconoclasm, 1566-1672. Material Religion in the Dutch Golden Age*, 29; J. J. Temminck, "Bavo en Maria," in *De Bavo te boek*, ed. J. N. de Boer et al. (Haarlem: Enschedé, 1985), 148-49.

<sup>143</sup> Mochizuki notes that a request was made in 1622 for the removal of the sculpture, which was obviously declined. After it was eventually removed in 1847, it was placed inside the church where it is currently on view. Mochizuki, *The Netherlandish Image after Iconoclasm, 1566-1672. Material Religion in the Dutch Golden Age*, 113, 124 n. 17. See also Truus van Bueren, *Tot lof van Haarlem. Het beleid van de stad Haarlem ten aanzien van de kunstwerken uit geconfisqueerde geestelijke instellingen*, 219.

Haarlemers not only maintained their relationship with the city's Catholics, but also continued to venerate Mary in their day-to-day lives.

Indeed, the relatively peaceful coexistence of Catholics and Protestants in Haarlem in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries allowed for a considerable measure of tolerance, if not affinity, on the part of Calvinists for religious traditions and art that were associated with pre-Reformation Christianity. J. J. Temminck has shown that Haarlem's flourishing economy from its textile trade, beer production, and ship building united its multiconfessional residents behind a common purpose to encourage Calvinist emigration from Flanders and Wallonia while at the same time allowing its pre-existing Catholic population to contribute to the social, religious, and financial fabric of the city.<sup>144</sup> Pieter Biesboer posits that Haarlem's wealthy elite, many of whom were brewers, remained Catholic after the city's Alteration to Calvinism (1577-78), even though the States General in The Hague prohibited Catholics from holding public office.<sup>145</sup> The city allowed Catholics to flourish not only in business, but also in the St. Bavo Church. The Christmas Guild, which was mostly comprised of Catholics, held control of the Christmas Chapel even after 1581 when Catholics were forbidden to worship publicly in the city.<sup>146</sup> During the period

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<sup>144</sup> J. J. Temminck, "Haarlem: Its Social/Political History," in *Haarlem: The Seventeenth Century* (New Brunswick: The Jane Voorhees Zimmerli Art Museum, Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, 1983), 17-27.

<sup>145</sup> Pieter Biesboer, *Collections of Paintings in Haarlem, 1572-1745*, ed. Carol Togneri, Documents for the History of Collecting: Netherlandish Inventories (Los Angeles: The Provenance Index of the Getty Research Institute, 2001), 1:7-8.

<sup>146</sup> The 1579 Treaty of Utrecht, which granted the freedom of religion in the Dutch Republic, also declared the Reformed Church the public church and permitted it to seize control of all property owned by the Roman Catholic Church. The ban on

after the Alteration until around 1600, the majority of Haarlemers were Catholics who maintained their religious association with the Roman Catholic Church. As Biesboer demonstrates, since the Reformed government relied upon the Catholics' capital and influence in the marketplace, the Calvinists continued to allow Catholics to serve as city council members.<sup>147</sup> Although Haarlem officials prohibited its resident Catholics from openly flaunting their religiosity, the unusual allowances they provided Catholics in local government and their entitlement to the Christmas Chapel shows that Calvinists interacted with and supported Catholics to a degree that conveys their shared devotion to the Virgin.

Archival evidence also shows that Haarlem's Catholics and Protestants continued to acquire and maintain works of art depicting Mary in their private collections, which underscores their common interests and shared appreciation for the traditionally Roman Catholic devotional exemplar. Extant seventeenth-century inventories document forty-one works representing Mary in Haarlem art collections belonging to both Catholics and Protestants.<sup>148</sup> The subjects include devotional portraits of Mary, Mary featured with other saints, the Seven Sorrows of Mary, Mary with the Christ child, the Immaculate Conception, the Birth of Mary, the Presentation of Mary at the Temple, the Holy Family, and other scenes from Mary's life.

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Catholicism in Haarlem did not occur until 1581. In the St. Bavo Church's Christmas Chapel, Calvinists removed its altar and decorations, and prohibited the Guild members from holding "papist" ceremonies in the church. Although city officials allowed the Guild to meet after the Alteration, it was forced to accept Protestant members. *Ibid.*, 12-13.

<sup>147</sup> *Ibid.*, 13.

<sup>148</sup> For the list of Marian works by their Iconclass subject and number index with their corresponding inventory locations and numbers, see *Ibid.*, 409-11, 496-97.



From the inventory records, paintings of the Annunciation appear in the 1613 collection of Willem van Heijthuijsen, a Calvinist textile merchant, and in the 1668 collection of Tyman Oosdorp, a brewery owner and probably a member of the Reformed Church, given that he held several positions in city government.<sup>149</sup> Works depicting the Visitation are listed in the Catholic collections of Angenel van Akersloot from 1668, Agatha Pieters Bal from 1648, and Aeltie Pieters Begga from 1684.<sup>150</sup> Johan Damius, a doctor and son of a Dutch Reformed predicant, owned two scenes of the Nativity among numerous other biblical pictures according to his 1649 inventory.<sup>151</sup> Two members of the Wallonian Protestant community, Adriaen and Joost Crommelingh, owned scenes of the Circumcision as documented in their 1662 and 1682 inventories, respectively.<sup>152</sup> These examples of Marian artwork in Protestant collections testify to the continued presence of Mary in the daily lives of Haarlem's art collectors long after the Alteration. Regardless of whether the owners of the works considered them devotional, the inventories demonstrate at the very least that Protestants may have banned Catholicism but they did not reject Mary.

Goltzius's choice to explore certain aspects of Mary's life at a time when Catholicism was severely weakened in the Republic after the Reformation indicates that Calvinists embraced Marian devotion even after the Alteration. The success of Goltzius's series also suggests that Dutch artists played a considerable role in creating

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<sup>149</sup> The painting in Van Heijthuijsen's collection is listed as "Een tafereeltgen vande Engelse Groet," Oosdorp's painting is listed as "Een lang werpig stuck maria Bootschap." Ibid., 115-19, 207-9.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid., 205-6, 102-4, 270-74.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid., 105-6.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid., 153-57, 264-66.

and responding to a re-formed identity for Mary that Calvinist audiences embraced.

The local and international fame Goltzius acquired in his own lifetime would have been impossible had his images been censured or banned by the Calvinist authorities.

The biographer of sixteenth-century Netherlandish artists, Karel van Mander, allocated more of his *Schilder-Boeck* to Goltzius and the *Life of the Virgin* than to any other artist or work of art. Van Mander's remarks reveal that Goltzius's fellow artists also embraced and lauded his interpretation of the Marian theme. Dutch print publishers continued to sell new impressions of Goltzius's six original plates well into the latter half of the seventeenth century. Claes Jansz Visscher, the staunchly Calvinist print publisher and art dealer in Amsterdam, initially acquired the plates; later, his grandson, Nicolaes Visscher II, listed the six prints in a sales catalogue of 1682 as "*Vrouwe leven Mariae, of de Meester-stucken, van H. Goltzius, 6 Bladen*" (Life of Lady Mary, or the Master pieces, of H. Goltzius, 6 sheets).<sup>153</sup>

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<sup>153</sup> Claes Jansz Visscher (1587-1652) purchased most of Goltzius's plates in the seventeenth century along with his son, Nicolaes I (1618-79), and grandson, Nicolaes II (1649-1702), printed and sold new impressions from them. For the listing of Goltzius's series in Visscher's catalogue, see Nicolaes Visscher, *Catalogus van groote en kleene land-kaerten, steden, printkunst en boecken van Nicolaes Visscher van Amsterdam, op den Dam in de Visscher* (Amsterdam: Nicolaes Visscher, 1682), 7. For discussions of the listing, see Van der Coelen, *Rembrandts passie. Het Nieuwe Testament in de Nederlandse prentkunst van de zestiende en zeventiende eeuw*, 54-55; Jan Piet Filedt Kok, "De wisselvallige reputatie van Hendrick Goltzius," *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum* 52, no. 1 (2004): 29, 54 n. 14; Leeftang and Luijten, *Hendrick Goltzius (1558-1617): Drawings, Prints and Paintings*, 322 n. 37. Veldman has remarked that Claes Jansz Visscher's membership in the Reformed Church played a significant role in the choices of biblical images and the modifications he made to particularly Catholic scenes that he published in accordance with Calvinist principles. Ilja M. Veldman, "Protestantism and the Arts: Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century Netherlands," in *Seeing Beyond the Word: Visual Arts and the Calvinist Tradition*, 417-18.

Thus, it can be argued that the resounding success of Goltzius's series contributed to the production of other seventeenth-century Dutch works of art with Marian themes that emphasize her as the humble, earthly Mother of God. The large quantity of prints and paintings depicting the Holy Family and individual scenes from Mary's life, including those by Rembrandt, testify to Mary's continued popularity in Dutch art after the Reformation. Goltzius's *Life of the Virgin* manifests in microcosm the re-formation of Mary's role in the complex religious plurality of the Republic during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. The series also informs our understanding of printmaking's role in promoting and manifesting Marian devotion in the Northern Netherlands after the Reformation.

## CHAPTER TWO

### ‘Als *Vrouwe*, of *Moeder*, en als *Maagt*’: Mary as Everywoman in Dutch Prints of the Holy Family

By the 1630s, Dutch artists radically transformed their representations of Mary from the traditional, *unearthly* Queen of Heaven to an *earthly* guise as a contemporaneous, young Dutch woman. The rise in popularity of Mary’s depiction as the mother of Christ, and simultaneously as an Everywoman, paralleled the success of the burgeoning genres of portraiture and scenes of everyday life in Dutch art. Into the first decades of the seventeenth century, Mary’s likeness as an idealized celestial figure was typical of her portrayal in European art, including that produced in the United Provinces. For example, Jacob Matham’s engraving after a design by Abraham Bloemaert, *The Virgin in the Glory on a Crescent* (fig. 56), 1607, depicts Mary’s customary persona as an otherworldly saint, underscored by the clouds upon which she sits, the sickle moon beneath her feet, the rays of light emanating from her head, and the angels swooning around her from the top corners of the composition. Later Dutch artists diverged from this manner of representing Mary and instead pictured her in the context of daily, domestic life. In scenes such as Rembrandt’s *The Holy Family* (fig. 57), ca. 1633-35, images of Mary transformed her into a figure that resembled an ordinary mother with the clothing, physiognomy, and household accoutrements that viewers would logically associate with actual Dutch women of the period.

Mary's pictorial conversion into a secularized figure constitutes one of the most striking innovations in religious imagery made by seventeenth-century Dutch artists. They re-formed Mary from her traditional guise as the heavenly *Diva Dei Genetrix* (Divine Mother of God) into a worldly Everywoman. This mode of her depiction removed her from the specific Roman Catholic context and fashioned her into a figure appropriate for Protestant devotions as well. The deliberate shift in her representation, I posit, contributed to her sustained popularity in Dutch visual culture and her newfound manifestation in seventeenth-century Dutch Protestant devotional literature.

The mode of depicting Mary as a secular woman, yet still identifiable as the Virgin by her attributes, may be traced back to at least the early decades of the seventeenth century. One of the first images of a secular family by a Dutch artist that evokes Mary as an Everywoman is the engraving *Winter* by Magdalena van de Passe after her father, Crispijn van de Passe (fig. 58).<sup>154</sup> The print must date from the

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<sup>154</sup> The print measures 23.7 x 16.1 cm. Hollstein lists two states of the print as number 12 from the series of four prints that are numbered 9-12. F. W. H. Hollstein, *Dutch and Flemish Etchings, Engravings, and Woodcuts, ca. 1450-1700*, 12: 215-16. The print is also described in Franken's 1881 catalogue raisonné of the Van de Passe family's artistic production, which was reprinted in 1975. In Franken, *Winter* is catalogue number 1161 from the series of the four seasons, numbers 1158-61. Daniel Franken, *L'oeuvre gravé des van de Passe. Catalogue raisonné des estampes de Chrispijn senior et junior, Simon, Willem, Magdalena et Chrispijn III van de Passe, graveurs néerlandais des XVIe et XVIIe siècles. Précédé d'une introduction biographique, avec des listes chronologiques et alphabétiques. Augmenté d'un supplément d'additions et corrections par Simon Laschitzer*, Scripta artis monographia (Amsterdam: G. W. Hissink & Co., 1975), 19:208-9. In Laschitzer, the prints are: *Spring* (no. 163), *Summer* (no. 163), *Autumn* (no. 158), and *Winter* (no. 161). Simon Laschitzer, "Berichtungen, Ergänzungen und Nachträge zu L'Oeuvre gravé des van de Passe décrit par D. Franken," *Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft* 8

beginning of her artistic career in 1612 when her family resided in Utrecht until her death in 1638. *Winter* could have influenced printmakers and painters, such as Rembrandt and Emanuel de Witte, who by the 1640s took interest in Mary's secularized representation. The print could also have made an impression on other artists, including Pieter de Hooch, who specialized in the 1650s in entirely secular scenes of mothers and children.

*Winter* centers on a mother nursing her infant while reclining in a *bakermat*—a woven couch with a high back—surrounded by an old man, a young boy holding a cat on his lap, a blazing fire, and other common household items. The *bakermat*, a popular piece of Northern European domestic furniture only extant today on a miniature scale in seventeenth-century Dutch dollhouses (fig. 59), permitted women

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(1885): 439-83. Given the frequency with which I will refer to both Magdalena van de Passe and Crispijn van de Passe in this chapter, I will usually refer to the artists by their first names for economy of language and to avoid confusion. Born in Cologne in 1600, Magdalena studied under her father, Crispijn van de Passe, one of the most prolific and influential printmakers of the period. Crispijn van de Passe (1564-1637) began his career in Antwerp as an engraver. After Antwerp fell to the Spanish Catholics in 1585, he was forced to move to Cologne in 1589 due to his conflicting Mennonite religious convictions. He worked in Cologne until 1611 as a noteworthy print publisher before settling in Utrecht by 1612. On Crispijn and his family, see Ilja M. Veldman, *Crispijn de Passe and His Progeny (1564-1670): A Century of Print Production*, ed. Peter Fuhring, Ger Luitjen, and Jan van der Stock, trans. Michael Hoyle, *Studies in Prints and Printmaking* (Rotterdam: Sound & Vision Publishers, 2001), 3:13, 28, 175. On Magdalena van de Passe, see Els Kloek, Catherine Peters Sengers, and Esther Tobé, *Vrouwen en kunst in de Republiek, een overzicht* (Hilversum: Verloren, 1998), 157-58. I am deeply grateful to Robert Fucci for his knowledgeable advice, generous research, and patience in helping me to attribute *Winter* to Crispijn and Magdalena van de Passe. I first came into contact with the print in the Atlas van Stolk collection in Rotterdam, cat. no. 2137. For a discussion of the engraving in the context of prints and paintings of the winter season, see the exhibition catalogue Evert van Straaten, *Koud tot op het bot: de verbeelding van de winter in de zestiende en zeventiende eeuw in de nederlanden* (The Hague: Staatsuitgeverij, 1977), 20, cat. no. 27.

to sit upright as they breastfed their infants.<sup>155</sup> The depiction of a *bakermat* in the print *Winter* suggests the object's practical function in everyday, secular Dutch life. Yet, the scene's visual resemblance to sixteenth-century Netherlandish art of the Holy Family presents the possibility of a religious meaning for the image. As this chapter will show, by virtue of a strikingly similar configuration of the figures and objects in *Winter* to Holy Family imagery, the print overtly evokes Marian iconography. Although the main figures in *Winter* should not necessarily be identified as Mary, Joseph, and the Christ child, they visually resemble images of the Holy Family from not only the sixteenth century, but also those that appear in the seventeenth century by other Dutch artists. Thus, I contend that the secular family in *Winter* suggests the Holy Family, and that the print facilitated the Virgin's sustained popularity in later seventeenth-century art.

The widespread appeal that both traditional and secularized Marian images had for a broad, multiconfessional audience can be measured not only by the sheer number of extant pictures on the theme, but also by historical records of their purchase by Catholic and Protestant patrons. For example, the 1657 death inventory of the Amsterdam Catholic art dealer, Johannes de Renialme, listed two portraits of Mary and Joseph by Rembrandt.<sup>156</sup> De Renialme may have taken interest in the saints

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<sup>155</sup> On the use of the *bakermat* in seventeenth-century Dutch houses and as decoration in dollhouses, see Jet Pijzel-Dommisse, *Het Hollandse Pronkpoppenhuis. Interieur en huishouden in de 17de en 18de eeuw* (Amsterdam: Waanders, 2000), 34, 109-11.

<sup>156</sup> Rembrandt's paintings of the Holy Family in De Renialme's June 27, 1657 estate inventory are two of thirteen by the artist in the collection that hung "in the first front room" and "in the large front hall" of the dealer's home. The first painting,

in light of his own religious convictions, or he may have intended to sell the work to his clientele, which included both Catholics and Protestants.<sup>157</sup> Records also show that the Amsterdam Calvinists, Marten Soolmans and his wife, Oopjen Coppit, bought a painting of the Holy Family by Rembrandt that scholars deduce was his Munich picture, *The Holy Family* (Figure 57).<sup>158</sup> While scholars have no means to

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“Maria ende Joseph van Rembrant van Rhijn,” numbered 399, is followed by a second unnumbered work listed as “C: Maria ende Joseph van Remb: van Rijn.” Although the reference for the abbreviation “C” is not provided in the inventory, the two listings are followed by different prices indicating that they are separate works. For the inventory, see Abraham Bredius, *Künstler-inventare; urkunden zur Geschichte der Holländischen kunst des XVIten, XVIIten und XVIIIten Jahrhunderts* (The Hague: M. Nijhoff, 1915), 1:230-36. For Rembrandt’s paintings in the inventory, see Rembrandt Harmenszoon van Rijn, Walter L. Strauss, and Marjon van der Meulen, *The Rembrandt Documents* (New York: Abaris Books, 1979), 397. On the inaccuracies in the Bredius list, and on De Renialme’s inventory in general, see John Michael Montias, “A Secret Transaction in Seventeenth-Century Amsterdam,” *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 24, no. 1 (1996): 9. See also Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch Painters of the Seventeenth Century* (London: Macmillan, 1916), 77, cat. no. 94b.

<sup>157</sup> John Loughman, “Salomon Koninck’s ‘St Mark the Evangelist,’” *The Burlington Magazine* 139, no. 1135 (1997): 693-94. For a general discussion of dealers in Amsterdam, their clients, and business practices, see John Michael Montias, “Art Dealers in the Seventeenth-Century Netherlands,” *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 18, no. 4 (1988): 244-56.

<sup>158</sup> The newly married couple commissioned portraits by Rembrandt that date to the same period as his painting, *The Holy Family*. The work may have been another commission ordered by the couple, or it could have been one the paintings available to them for purchase from his existing collection. An inventory from 1660 made after Marten Soolmans’s death mentions *The Holy Family* among the couple’s belongings. The inventory describes the work as “een schilderij van joseph en Maria, gedaen door Rembrandt” (a painting of Joseph and Maria done by Rembrandt), which scholars agree most likely refers to the Munich painting. See Abraham Bredius, *Rembrandt schilderijen* (Utrecht: W. de Haan, 1935), 544, document 1659/9; Josua Bruyn et al., *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings*, vol. 2 (The Hague, Boston and London: M. Nijhoff Publishers, 1986), A 88, document 1660/8; Friso Lammertse and Jaap van der Veen, *Uylenburgh & Son. Art and Commerce from Rembrandt to De Lairese, 1625-1675* (Zwolle and Amsterdam: Waanders and The Rembrandthouse



identify conclusively the Marian pictures owned by De Renialme or Soolmans and Coppit with extant works, the evidence we have that both Catholics and Protestants possessed Marian images underscores the theme's popularity among multiconfessional audiences. Given the positive reception of the Marian theme in the Dutch Catholic and Protestant art market, artists could have helped facilitate the Virgin's reappropriation as a devotional figure in seventeenth-century Dutch Protestant literature published in the wake of the Reformation.

A remarkable shift in Marian devotion occurred in the mid-seventeenth century in the United Provinces that permitted the Roman Catholic exemplar to function as a viable model for Protestants. One of the most explicit examples of Marian devotional literature published in the context of the Calvinist, Reformed Church is *Lof der Heilige Maagt Maria, en de triumerende Christus, over sijne verrijzenis en hemel-vaert* (In Praise of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and the Triumphal

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Museum, 2006), 149. On the Soolmans-Coppit ownership of *The Holy Family*, see also Holm Bevers, Peter Schatborn, and Barbara Welzel, *Rembrandt: The Master and His Workshop, Drawings and Etchings* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press in association with National Gallery Publications, 1991), 161-63; Volker Manuth, "Religious History Paintings in the World of Rembrandt," in *Rembrandt and Dutch History Painting in the 17th Century*, ed. Akira Kofuku (Tokyo: National Museum of Western Art, 2004), 59; Julia Lloyd Williams, *Rembrandt's Women* (Munich, London and New York: Prestel, 2001), 22, 83, 122, 254 n. 16. In contrast, Christian Tümpel argues that Rembrandt's works of the Holy Family must have been intended only for Catholic patrons based on Mary's traditional role in Roman Catholicism that Protestants, he argued, disdained. While recent scholarship has discounted such a narrow view of the function and meaning of religious imagery in seventeenth-century Dutch culture, Tümpel rightly acknowledges that Dutch Catholics would be attracted to scenes of Mary and the Holy Family. Christian Tümpel, *Rembrandt in Selbstzeugnissen und Bilddokumenten* (Rowohlt: Reinbek bei Hamburg, 1977), 29-30. On the theme of the Holy Family in Rembrandt's work in general, see Joan Mary Hogan, "The Iconography of Rembrandt's Depictions of the Holy Family (in a Domestic Setting)" (M.A. thesis, Queen's University, 2008).

Christ, about his Resurrection and Ascension), by the staunch Calvinist predicant, Willem Sluiter.<sup>159</sup> He first published his large, ambitious volume in 1669 in Amsterdam, after which it underwent more than ten reprints and revisions well into the early nineteenth century. In his commendation of Mary, Sluiter called her “a crown far above all,” which provides justification for his agenda to endorse her as a legitimate devotional figure for Protestants.<sup>160</sup> The book’s tremendous popularity and its sustained appeal among Dutch Calvinists, as demonstrated by its numerous editions, indicates that Protestants did not abandon Mary in their theological tracts after the Reformation.

Sluiter’s concentration on Mary and her role as the mother of Christ in *Lof der Heilige Maagt Maria* reveals that some Calvinist theologians not only tolerated devotion to Mary, but also publicly encouraged her veneration among their Dutch parishioners. Sluiter dedicated his tome to Protestant Dutch wives and young girls in pursuit of moral excellence who could find their ideal model in Mary. Given the book’s dedication and the author’s almost exclusive use of the Dutch vernacular

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<sup>159</sup> Willem Sluiter, *Lof der Heilige Maagt Maria, en de triumerende Christus, over sijne verrijzenis en hemel-vaert* (Amsterdam: Hieronymus Sweerts, 1669).

<sup>160</sup> “Een kroon, verr’ boven alle,” quoted in Kronenburg, *Maria's Heerlijkheid in Nederland. Geschiedkundige schets van de Vereering der H. Maagd in ons Vaderland, van de broegste tijden tot op onze dagen*, 190. See also Knipping, *Iconography of the Counter Reformation in the Netherlands: Heaven on Earth*, 245. Knipping includes Jacob Cats and Jeremias Decker among the Dutch Calvinist supporters of Mary. Jacob Cats, *Alle de Wercken, so ouden als nieuwe* (Amsterdam: Iacobsz Schipper, 1655), 252; Jeremias de Decker, *Rym-Oeffeningen. Vergdeelt in dry Boecken*. 3rd ed. (Amsterdam: Willem de Coup, Willem Lamsvelt, and Philip Verbeek, 1702), 72, col. 60. On Sluiter, see also K. F. Proost, *De Bijbel in de Nederlandsche Letterkunde* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1932-33), 2:172.

language for its text, Sluiter likely targeted his parishioners as his readership rather than elite, learned theologians or book collectors.

Sluiter's devotional handbook extols Mary's virtues in a compilation of songs, poems, and prose that emphasizes her three separate, but simultaneous roles: "als *Vrouwe*, of *Moeder*, en als *Maagt*" (as wife, or mother, and as virgin; italics in the original).<sup>161</sup> His description of Mary as an earthly woman contrasts her portrayal as a heavenly entity in seventeenth-century Netherlandish Catholic art of the Immaculate Conception. The emphasis Sluiter deliberately made on Mary's earthly nature logically responds to her secularized representation in Dutch art that had already occurred by the 1640s.

Sluiter's turn to Mary—a singular figure in the pantheon of Roman Catholic saints—as the primary archetype for Calvinist women in the Republic and the manual's resounding popularity seems today astonishing. His choice of subject is particularly unexpected given his active participation in the archconservative

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<sup>161</sup> Willem Sluiter (1627-73) emphasized Mary's three-fold identity in his text by capitalizing and italicizing each of the words he used to articulate her roles as I have transcribed here. His somewhat awkward description of Mary "as wife, or mother" distinguishes her as the virgin wife of Joseph, and at the same time, as the mother of God. This distinction underscores Joseph's parental function as the foster father of Christ, not his biological father. Sluiter's quote appears in the introduction to the 1687 edition of his handbook, W. [Willem Sluiter] Sluiters, *Lof der Heilige Maagt Maria, en de triompherende Christus, over sijne verrijsenis en hemel-vaert* (Amsterdam: Johannes Boekholt, 1687). Another popular devotional text was his Marian songbook, *Lofzang der Heilige Maria en Triomferende Christus* (Hymns of the Blessed Mary and Triumphal Christ), which was first published in 1688 in Amsterdam; it was republished in at least seven editions until 1739. Willem Sluiter, *W. Sluiters Lofzang der Heilige Maria en Triomferende Christus, verrijkt met verscheide Gezangen, slaande op de historie van Christus geboorte en leven. Alles seer kurieus op noten gestelt. Noit voor desen soo gedrukt* (Amsterdam: Gerbrant Schagen, 1688).

Calvinist *Nadere Reformatie* movement, the so-called Dutch “Further Reformation.” This movement sought to apply the strict tenets of the Protestant Reformation to the everyday lives of its followers.<sup>162</sup> Thus, Sluiter’s focus on Mary as a prototypical exemplar for his female readers provides evidence that Calvinists publicly supported Marian devotion after the Reformation. An investigation of early seventeenth-century Holy Family imagery with a particular focus on Crispijn’s *Winter*, engraved by his daughter Magdalena, as one of the theme’s earliest manifestations in Dutch art will shed light on how and why the shift in Mary’s earthly, secularized conception took place by the 1640s and possibly influenced Sluiter’s appropriation of her as his female moral standard.

While historians of Dutch art in recent scholarship have examined prints and paintings of the Holy Family, especially those by Rembrandt and his circle, none has fully traced the theme’s pictorial evolution. Some scholars have acknowledged that certain entirely secular family scenes are visually similar to those of the traditional Holy Family, thereby calling attention to the spiritual and moral metaphors such images would present for the viewer. Linda Stone-Ferrier notes that seventeenth-century pictures of the secularized Holy Family by Rembrandt, for example,

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<sup>162</sup> The Calvinist theologian and professor at the University of Utrecht, Gisbertus Voetius, was also a leading member of the *Nadere Reformatie*. Sluiter studied theology in Utrecht under Voetius after which he served as a minister in 1653 at Eibergen in the province of Gelderland. Cornelis Blokland, *Willem Sluiter, 1627-1673* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1965); T. Brienens et al., *Theologische aspecten van de Nadere Reformatie* (Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum, 1993); Fred A. van Lieburg, “From Pure Church to Pious Culture: The Further Reformation in the Seventeenth-Century Dutch Republic,” in *Later Calvinism: International Perspectives*, ed. Fred W. Graham (Kirkville, MO: Sixteenth Century Journal Publishers, 1994), 409-29.

purposefully blurred the distinction between scenes of everyday life and those of well-established religious subjects in order to evoke the tenets of Calvinism.<sup>163</sup> The emphasis Calvinist theologians placed on God's presence in the mundane reality of humankind's daily existence offered fertile new ground in which Dutch artists could cultivate innovative pictorial modes of traditional religious themes. Julia Lloyd Williams's discussion of Rembrandt's Holy Family imagery on the other hand, argues that the vestiges of conventional forms of religious themes in his secularized Holy Family scenes better point to the artist's desire to emulate other masters, such as Peter Paul Rubens, Anthony van Dyck, and Titian.<sup>164</sup>

Although the depiction of the Holy Family in a contemporaneous setting is by no means exclusive to seventeenth-century Dutch art, scholars have examined the relevance of secularized Holy Family imagery to changing Dutch attitudes about family, motherhood, child rearing, and homemaking in the Republic. Mariët Westermann states that scenes of mothers depicted in domestic interiors are a "secular incarnation" of Mary. Further, the new middle-class nuclear families, which were structured around clear gendered hierarchies within the home, perpetuated a market

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<sup>163</sup> Stone-Ferrier states that images of the secularized Holy Family are readily identifiable as both "an anonymous, humble seventeenth-century family *and* the Holy Family," which infuses the images with a sense of "intimacy and spirituality." Linda A. Stone-Ferrier, *Dutch Prints of Daily Life: Mirrors of Life or Masks of Morals?* (Lawrence: The Spencer Museum of Art, the University of Kansas, 1983), 21.

<sup>164</sup> Williams draws this conclusion in her analysis of Rembrandt's *The Holy Family* in Munich. Williams, *Rembrandt's Women*, 102.

for Holy-Family-like imagery that resembled their own lifestyle.<sup>165</sup> The Holy Family, Westermann maintains, served as the model for the Dutch, Christian family that would include Catholics and Protestants, which in turn furnished the paradigm for the political and religious framework of the Republic.<sup>166</sup> Westermann's association of scenes depicting Mary and the Holy Family in a contemporaneous Netherlandish dwelling with Dutch culture as a whole suggests that the imagery would have held particular appeal for a remarkably large audience.

Similarly, Wayne Franits, in his study of Dutch domestic imagery, comments that Pieter de Hooch's painting, *Interior with a Mother and a Baby* (fig. 60), ca. 1665-68, appropriates Mary as a symbol of love and holiness in an otherwise secular family scene.<sup>167</sup> Franits posits that the popularity of domestic themes in the mid century, fueled by a steady demand from patrons, reflected the "civilizing process" that reshaped Dutch culture throughout the century.<sup>168</sup> He attributes the Dutch

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<sup>165</sup> Mariët Westermann, "'Costly and Curious, Full of pleasure and home contentment': Making Home in the Dutch Republic," in *Art & Home: Dutch Interiors in the Age of Rembrandt* (Zwolle: Waanders Publishers, 2001), 61.

<sup>166</sup> Ibid., 53-54.

<sup>167</sup> The painting is located in London's Wernher Collection. Wayne Franits, *Pieter de Hooch: A Woman Preparing Bread and Butter for a Boy* (Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2006), 42.

<sup>168</sup> Wayne Franits, "Domesticity, Privacy, Civility, and the Transformation of Adriaen van Ostade's Art," in *Images of Women in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Art: Domesticity and the Representation of the Peasant*, ed. Patricia Phagan (Athens: Georgia Museum of Art, 1996), 12-15. Franits credits his use of the theory of the civilizing process to Norbert Elias's work, first published in 1939 in German, on the ways in which European society imposed strict rules of decorum upon itself as it developed throughout the course of history. Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process*, trans. Edmund Jephcott, vol. 1 (New York: Urizen Books, 1978). On Franits's applications of the theory to seventeenth-century Dutch art, see also Franits, *Pieter de Hooch: A Woman Preparing Bread and Butter for a Boy*, 56-58.

patriciate's fascination with family imagery to its growing wealth and desire to use art to construct and define elitist manners and values. The home, Franits posits, was considered "a true microcosm of the state as a whole" and families represented *kleyne kercken* (little churches), meaning that proper domestic conduct in the home positively affected all of Dutch society.<sup>169</sup>

Etiquette guides for women that proliferated throughout the Republic, as Franits and numerous other scholars have acknowledged, undoubtedly contributed to the general fascination that the Dutch had with family, home life, education, and the benefits of nurturing children. The most popular conduct books included Jacob Cats's *Houwelyck* (Marriage), 1625; Johan van Beverwijk, *Schat der Gezondheid* (The Treasury of Health), 1643; Petrus Wittewrongel's *Oeconomia Christiana ofte Christelicke huys-houdinghe* (Oeconomia Christiana, or the Christian Household), 1661; and Bernhardum Wallenkamp's *Inleydinghe in Zions-schole* (Introduction to the School of Zion), 1661.<sup>170</sup> Certainly, as scholars have pointed out, the Republic's thriving political and social condition, as well as the pervasive distribution of domestic guides, paralleled the popularity of tranquil depictions of the secularized Holy Family and secular family in Dutch art. Yet, through what process did

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<sup>169</sup> Franits, *Pieter de Hooch: A Woman Preparing Bread and Butter for a Boy*, 42-44.

<sup>170</sup> See, for example, Wayne Franits, *Paragons of Virtue: Women and Domesticity in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 13; Simon Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches: An Interpretation of Dutch Culture in the Golden Age*, esp. his essay, "Housewives and Hussies: Homeliness and Worldliness," 375-480.

seventeenth-century Dutch artists bridge the gap between the Holy Family members' traditional representations in art to that of their re-formed, secularized persona?

### **The Secularized Holy Family in Early Seventeenth-Century Dutch Art**

The evolution of the sacred to the secularized depiction of the Holy Family in Dutch art, it can be argued, may have begun with Magdalena van de Passe's engraving, *Winter* (Figure 58). The image ostensibly depicts one of the four seasons while simultaneously conceiving of the time of year in terms of a grouping that evokes both the Holy and "Every" family. As such, *Winter* may be the first image to portray the sacred, Holy Family in Dutch art of the seventeenth century. Based on a design by her father, Crispijn van de Passe, and an earlier drawing possibly by Magdalena herself (fig. 61), the engraving *Winter* belongs to a print series of the seasons.<sup>171</sup> The composition focuses on an old male figure—the personification of

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<sup>171</sup> Two prints in the series, *Winter* and *Summer*, are not signed. The artist provided the most information about the series on the print, *Spring*, which she signed "Crispin de pas inventor et excud." on the bottom left, thus giving credit to her father as the designer and publisher (*inventor* and *excudit*). The signature in the bottom right, "Magdalena van de pas. sculp.," identifies her as the engraver (*sculpsit*). She signed *Autumn* in the bottom right of the print, "Magd. pass. fe." Due to the unified style and compositions of the four prints, scholars have conclusively attributed the entire series to Crispijn as the designer, and his daughter, Magdalena, as the printmaker. Franken, *L'oeuvre gravé des van de Passe. Catalogue raisonné des estampes de Chrispijn senior et junior, Simon, Willem, Magdalena et Chrispijn III van de Passe, graveurs néerlandais des XVIe et XVIIe siècles. Précédé d'une introduction biographique, avec des listes chronologiques et alphabétiques. Augmenté d'un supplément d'additions et corrections par Simon Laschitzer*, 208-9. The preliminary drawing for *Winter* measures 22.7 x 16.4 cm. It is signed in the lower left, "Magdalena v.d. Passe." For the drawing, in the collection of Cologne's Wallraf-Richartz Museum, see Hella Robels, *Niederländische Zeichnungen vom 15. Bis 19. Jahrhundert im Wallraf-Richartz-Museum Köln* (Cologne: Wallraf-Richartz-Museum,



winter—pictured with his family in a cozy domestic interior. The old man, a young mother suckling her infant, and a boy comfortably relax in front of the fire roaring inside their kitchen's hearth, which recalls the long tradition of wintertime scenes, such as the illuminated manuscript of February by Paul, Herman, and Jean Limbourg from 1412-16 (fig. 62). The sincere affection the figures express toward one another in combination with the warmth of their enclosed living space elevates this humble group to a model for the ideal family.

In designing *Winter*, Crispijn clearly looked to Cesare Ripa's *Iconologia*, the standard manual for artists on symbols and stock imagery they could appropriate for emblem books. Ripa specifically personifies the winter season as an old man or woman feasting at a table next to a fire.<sup>172</sup> Winter, Ripa instructs, can take the form of either Aeolus, the mythological god of the winds, or Vulcan, the god of fire.

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1983), 50, cat. no. 45. Veldman states that Magdalena probably did not sign her name to the drawing, but that a collector likely added it to the sheet at a later date. Veldman argues that Robels's attribution of the drawings for *Spring* and *Summer* to Magdalena is incorrect, and that they should in fact be credited entirely to Crispijn because he is listed as the inventor on impressions of the prints. Veldman, *Crispijn de Passe and His Progeny (1564-1670): A Century of Print Production*, 226-27.

<sup>172</sup> Ripa first published his guide in 1593 in Rome; it later underwent numerous editions and revisions. For the reprint of its 1603 edition, see Cesare Ripa, *Iconologia; overo descrizione di diverse imagini cavate dall'antichità, e di propria invention [von] Cesare Ripa. With an introduction by Erna Mandowsky* (Hildesheim and New York: G. Olms, 1970), 473-76. See also Veldman, *Crispijn de Passe and His Progeny (1564-1670): A Century of Print Production*, 160 n. 42. Fire has been a chief trait of the representation of Winter since antiquity as mentioned in Ovid's *Remedia amoris* (11:187-88), cited in Ilja M. Veldman, "Seasons, Planets and Temperaments in the Work of Maarten van Heemskerck: Cosmo-Astrological Allegory in Sixteenth-Century Netherlandish Prints," *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 11, no. 3/4 (1980): 152. See also, Ovid, *The Art of Love, and Other Poems*, trans. J. H. Mozley (Cambridge, MA, and London: Harvard University Press and Heinemann, 1979), 190-91.

Moreover, the figures should appear old—to suggest the final phase of the year—and perform appropriate activities for the season. Although Crispijn's *Winter* does not personify the season as a classical god, he portrays the season as an old man sitting beside a fire with a festive party in the distant background.<sup>173</sup>

Although Crispijn loosely follows Ripa's model for the personification of seasons, he prompts the viewer of *Winter* to search for an alternative meaning for the scene by virtue of its difference from the Latin inscription in the bottom margin of the sheet:

Gloomy winter announces old age to us,  
and that time of life usually brings stiffness  
because of the accompanying snow.<sup>174</sup>

Despite the presence in the composition's center of the old man, whose age and proximity to the warm fire embody the qualities of the winter season, as does the feast displayed in the background, the inscription seems to have little bearing on the rest of the composition. The affectionate family can be characterized as anything but "gloomy" or "stiff," as the inscription describes. Rather, the family appears cheerful

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<sup>173</sup> For depictions of the seasons as gods, labors of the months, and seasonal activities, as well as the association of wintertime with fire and food consumption, see Veldman, "Seasons, Planets and Temperaments in the Work of Maarten van Heemskerck: Cosmo-Astrological Allegory in Sixteenth-Century Netherlandish Prints," 151-63.

<sup>174</sup> "Tristis Hiems senium nobis designat, et aetas. / Sera Solet niuibus saepe rigere suis." I am grateful to Roger A. Noel, Thomas Sienkewicz, and Rebecca van Beem for their help in translating the Latin inscription. Evert van Straaten, in his discussion of the engraving in the exhibition catalogue, *Koud tot op het bot*, translates the inscription into Dutch less accurately, as follows: "De sombere winter duidt ons de ouderdom aan en de late leeftijd pleegt dikwijls star te zijn van de sneeuw, die erbij hoort." Van Straaten, *Koud tot op het bot: de verbeelding van de winter in de zestiende en zeventiende eeuw in de nederlanden*, 20.

and relaxed in their domestic interior. The lack of a clear connection between the pictorial composition and the inscription provides further motivation for the viewer to detect in the image meanings that do not necessarily relate to the winter season.

Indeed, Crispijn emphasized images over text, as we know, based on his written remark that a picture tends to create a greater impression on the viewer than does its inscription. In the introduction of his book, *Liber Genesis* (Book of Genesis), 1612, Crispijn comments, “It is in the nature of most people to derive more enjoyment from looking at illustrations of historical stories than from reading them. And often they imprint things deeper in their memories by seeing them rather than by hearing them.”<sup>175</sup> For Crispijn, images take precedence over their inscriptions because they better aid the viewer in committing a narrative to memory.

The viewer of *Winter* encounters another intriguing deviation from the scene’s iconographic conventions in its relationship with the prints in the rest of Crispijn’s series: *Spring* (fig. 63), *Summer* (fig. 64), and *Autumn* (fig. 65). Unlike *Winter*, two of the prints, *Spring* and *Autumn*, faithfully subscribe to Ripa’s guidelines for the attributes with which artists should associate the seasons: flowers, and grapes, respectively.<sup>176</sup> *Spring* features a boy and girl in a garden with animals, and in

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<sup>175</sup> “[P]lerosque mortalium ita animatos, ut magis delectentur inspectione historiarum, quam lectione earundum, atque penitus ea saepe in mentem demittant, quae visu, quam quae auditu perceperint,” in Crispijn van de Passe, *Liber Genesis* (Arnhem: 1612), 1. For the English translation from the Latin, see Ilja M. Veldman, *Profit and Pleasure: Print Books by Crispijn de Passe*, ed. Peter Fuhring, Ger Luijten, and Jan van der Stock, trans. Michael Hoyle, *Studies in Prints and Printmaking* (Rotterdam: Sound & Vision Publishers, 2001), 4:111-12.

<sup>176</sup> Ripa advises that three remaining seasons be represented with flowers (Spring), corn (Summer), and fruit or grapes (Autumn), or the mythological gods and

*Autumn* two men and a woman press grapes.<sup>177</sup> Crispijn's departure in *Summer* from Ripa's attribute for the season—sheaves of corn—seems at first surprising given the close attention he paid to the attributes for the previous two subjects. Crispijn depicts summer as an old man, a boy, and a young girl with a cow and milk pails. His choice of attributes becomes clear in view of the print's overt similarities with the engraving *Summer* (fig. 66), ca. 1601, by Jan Saenredam after Hendrick Goltzius. *Summer*, by Goltzius, also represents milk pails and a cow for that season, suggesting that Crispijn turned to Goltzius's series for his inspiration.<sup>178</sup>

Goltzius's series provided Crispijn with a model not only for *Summer*, but also for the rest of the cycle, with the exception of *Winter*. Goltzius's sequence of four prints, like Crispijn's, portrays the seasons as a male and female couple in the outdoors performing appropriate activities: walking with flowers and a bird in *Summer*; carrying a bundle of corn sheaves and a yoke for milk pails in *Spring* (fig. 67); and hauling baskets of grapes in *Autumn* (fig. 68).<sup>179</sup> Goltzius's *Winter* (fig. 69),

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goddesses Flora (Spring), Ceres (Summer), and Bacchus or Pomona (Autumn). Veldman, *Crispijn de Passe and His Progeny (1564-1670): A Century of Print Production*, 160 n. 42.

<sup>177</sup> The only other exception to Ripa's guide in Magdalena's series is *Summer*, which ought to include a torch and corn with a slightly older girl than the one pictured in *Spring*. Magdalena maintained the prescribed progression of ages in *Summer*, but utilized the theme of milking cows rather than harvesting corn. Milking cows, while not discussed in Ripa's guide for *Summer*, is still a logical activity for the season.

<sup>178</sup> *Summer* is undated, however the first print in the series, *Spring*, bears the date of 1601 in its lower center, thus Saenredam may have engraved the entire series in that year. In Hollstein, *Summer* is number 90 in the series numbered 89-92. F. W. H. Hollstein, *Dutch and Flemish Etchings, Engravings, and Woodcuts, ca. 1450-1700*, 23:67-70.

<sup>179</sup> Crispijn chose to exclude the element of corn in *Summer* that Goltzius featured in his version, which suggests that Crispijn relied more heavily upon

however, features a couple ice skating, which clearly shares no resemblance to Crispijn's scene of a loving family grouped together by a fireplace in a domestic interior.

The fact that Crispijn based three of his the four seasons on the series by Goltzius, while deliberately choosing another, more unconventional model for *Winter*, is further underscored by the fact that the inscriptions for Spring and Autumn in both series are identical to those written by the rector of Haarlem's Latin school, Cornelis Schonaeus.<sup>180</sup> Despite the fact that Crispijn copied the text from two of Goltzius's prints, demonstrating his willingness to borrow from other sources (and perhaps a lack of proficiency in Latin), the inscription for his own print of winter comes from an unknown source.<sup>181</sup> Therefore, the pictorial and textual similarities

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Goltzius's series as a pictorial model than he did on the traditional iconographic guidelines established by Ripa for the attributes of the seasons.

<sup>180</sup> The inscriptions for *Spring* and *Autumn* read, respectively: "Humanas recreo mentes, volucresque ferasque / Omnia floriferi laetantur tempore veris" (I refresh the human spirit, as I do the birds and the wild beasts: happiness is everywhere in the time of flower-bearing spring). "En ego maturos Autumnus profero fructus, / Efficioque mei ne sit spes vana coloni" (Behold me, Autumn; I proffer ripe fruit and ensure that the husband-man does not hope in vain). The above inscriptions and their English translations are from Ilja Veldman's discussion of Goltzius's series in the context of prints by Maarten van Heemskerck. Veldman does not, however, mention the series under discussion by Crispijn. Veldman, "Seasons, Planets and Temperaments in the Work of Maarten van Heemskerck: Cosmo-Astrological Allegory in Sixteenth-Century Netherlandish Prints," 162-63 n. 49. Schonaeus supplied Goltzius with many of the inscriptions for his prints. Van de Venne, *Cornelius Schonaeus Goudanus (1540-1611). Leven en werk van de Christelijke Terentius (Nieuwe bijdragen tot de geschiedenis van de Latijnse Scholen van Gouda, 's Gravenhage en Haarlem)*. See also the chapter on Goltzius's *Life of the Virgin* series in this dissertation.

<sup>181</sup> Goltzius's inscriptions for *Spring*, *Summer*, and *Autumn* are the same as those that appear on prints in his earlier series, *The Four Seasons*, which Saenredam also engraved. However, Goltzius used two different inscriptions for each print of

that Crispijn's series shares with Goltzius's indicate that the latter provided the model for the former, with the exception of Crispijn's *Winter*. Crispijn's divergence in *Winter* from Goltzius's series thus calls into question the source he used for that image.

Crispijn's *Winter* departs from pictorial precedents of the same theme. The male figure's preoccupation with the mother suckling her child instead of with the fire beside him or the feast in the background is not found in other extant images of the winter season. Other artists consistently focus on the activities, symbols or attributes of the season. The old man in Crispijn's *Winter*, however, fixes his gaze in the image on the nursing mother—an activity not associated with any season.

On one hand, we can argue that *Winter* depicts the personification of the season by virtue of the print's inscription and its placement within a series of the four seasons. On the other hand, the image's emphasis on an iconographic program—the idealized nuclear family—unrelated to the season, indicates that *Winter* can be interpreted as a representation of a season, the Holy Family, and an "Every" family at the same time. Comparing the pictorial relationship between *Winter* and other images

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winter in the respective series, neither of which Crispijn took for his own engraving of the subject. Goltzius's first series of the seasons is listed in Hollstein, numbers 93-96. The inscription for *Winter*, H. 96, reads: "Accumulata vides totum quaecunque per annum, / Exornant nostram glaciali tempore mensam" (All that you see gathered throughout the year provides us with rich fare in the season of icy cold). The inscription for *Winter*, H. 92, reads: "Accumulant homines totum quaecunque per annum, / Haec ego consumo, soli haec mihi cuncta parantur" (I consume everything that people stock throughout the year; it is all prepared for me alone). Veldman, "Seasons, Planets and Temperaments in the Work of Maarten van Heemskerck: Cosmo-Astrological Allegory in Sixteenth-Century Netherlandish Prints," 163 n. 49.

of the theme as well as those of traditional Holy Family scenes supports the plausibility of the engraving's co-existing subjects.

### **Crispijn van de Passe's Pictorial Precedents for the Engraving, *Winter***

An analysis of the pictorial tradition for the personification of winter illuminates the ways in which Crispijn deviated from the theme in *Winter*. Ilja Veldman, one of the few art historians to have discussed Crispijn's series of the four seasons, posits that he based his design for *Winter* on Hendrick Goltzius's previously discussed conception of the subject in his ca. 1601 series engraved by Jan Saenredam (Figure 69).<sup>182</sup> The amorous couple ice skating in Goltzius's *Winter*, Veldman argues, inspired Crispijn's design because both images depict the allegory of the season as a scene from everyday life. As pointed out above, Crispijn evidently based his other three prints in the series to which *Winter* belongs on Goltzius's series, which indicates his willingness to emulate pictorial models. However, Crispijn's *Winter* shares no direct compositional or iconographic similarities with that of Goltzius's skating couple.

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<sup>182</sup> In Bartsch, the print is listed as number 90 from the series numbered 87-90. It is number 92 in Hollstein from the series numbered 89-92. Hollstein, *Dutch and Flemish Etchings, Engravings, and Woodcuts, ca. 1450-1700*, 67-71; Yvette Bruijnen and Paul Huys Janssen, *De Vier Jaargetijden in de kunst van de Nederlanden, 1500-1750* (Zwolle, Den Bosch and Leuven: Waanders, Noordbrabants Museum, and Stedelijk Museum Vander Kelen-Mertens, 2002), 139-40, cat. no. 58; Veldman, *Crispijn de Passe and His Progeny (1564-1670): A Century of Print Production*, 226-27. See also Ilja M. Veldman, *The New Hollstein Dutch and Flemish Etchings, Engravings and Woodcuts, 1450-1700*, ed. Ger Luijten (Roosendaal and Amsterdam: Koninklijke van Poll in cooperation with the Rijksprentenkabinet, Rijksmuseum, 1993), 317-18.

Crispijn's *Winter* diverges from Goltzius's pictorial precedent of a skating couple for the same theme in two significant ways. First, he relegates the iconography of winter to the background, whereas an appropriate activity for the season dominates the foreground of Goltzius's scene. While Crispijn includes an old man and a fire in the foreground of his *Winter*—two main attributes of the season—the focus of his composition is not on these elements, but on the mother and child. His only other association with winter takes the form of the feasting party in the background. In contrast to the tranquil mood of the activity in the foreground, an open door at the far right reveals an adjoining room filled with a jovial group of six male and female figures seated around a large table. Like the boy in the left foreground, the partygoers in the background turn toward the picture plane while hoisting their tankards, as if toasting the viewer. Indeed, Crispijn's *oeuvre* demonstrates his proclivity for including sketchily drawn narratives in the background of his compositions. However, as Veldman demonstrates, the subjects he portrays in the distant areas of his scenes are only “opposite ancillary details” to the primary meaning of the image, which he places in the foreground.<sup>183</sup>

Second, Crispijn's focus on the nursing mother in the center of *Winter* does not relate at all to Goltzius's print of an amorous couple skating outdoors on ice. Although the feast scene Crispijn's background alludes to an indoor, wintry activity, Crispijn foregrounded the print's primary meaning in the center of the image with a tight-knit group of a mother, infant, and old man that evokes the Holy Family. In

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<sup>183</sup> Veldman, *Crispijn de Passe and His Progeny (1564-1670): A Century of Print Production*, 118-19.



contrast, he relegated winter to the composition's background. Thus, it seems unlikely that Crispijn looked to Goltzius's print of skaters for his primary inspiration for *Winter*.

Similarly, other images on the theme of winter upon which Crispijn could have based his image also represent the season with traditional motifs. A survey of the examples in two recent exhibitions on the subject of seasonal allegories in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Netherlandish art, *Koud tot op het bot* and *De Vier Jaargetijden*, shows that every artist relied upon typical personifications of the seasons.<sup>184</sup> Early sixteenth-century allegories of the seasons appropriated mythological deities or classical literary references to symbolize each time of year, references which are absent from Crispijn's *Winter*.<sup>185</sup> For example, Goltzius's design for *Winter* (fig. 70), engraved in 1589 by Jacob Matham, depicts an old man hovering over flames rising from the small kettle he holds in his fragile hands. Such imagery that references the zodiac, the ages of man, and the four winds, stemmed from recurring themes in classical literature.<sup>186</sup> In another example, Adriaen van de Venne's drawing, *Winter* (fig. 71), 1622, of an old man and woman in an icy

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<sup>184</sup> Van Straaten, *Koud tot op het bot: de verbeelding van de winter in de zestiende en zeventiende eeuw in de nederlanden*, esp. chapter 4; Ilja M. Veldman, "Waaien met de mode mee: De Vier Jaargetijden in de prentkunst van de Nederlanden," in *De Vier Jaargetijden in de kunst van de Nederlanden, 1500-1750*, 73-81.

<sup>185</sup> On the influence of Flemish artists on Crispijn van de Passe and his children in their representation of allegories through the depiction of classical gods and goddesses, seasons, ages, and elements, see Veldman, *Crispijn de Passe and His Progeny (1564-1670): A Century of Print Production*, 121-22.

<sup>186</sup> Veldman, "Seasons, Planets and Temperaments in the Work of Maarten van Heemskerck: Cosmo-Astrological Allegory in Sixteenth-Century Netherlandish Prints," 155, 163.

landscape, portrays the season with figures participating in appropriate activities for the time of year in wintry outdoor settings. Even Jan Sadeler's undated engraving after Dirck Barendsz, *Winter* (fig. 72), of an old man wearing a fur-lined hat seated to the right of a roaring fire with a cat and dog at his side cannot have served as a model for Crispijn's *Winter*. Given that the old man and the fire in Crispijn's engraving are tertiary elements to the composition's central focus on the nursing mother, the print does not conform to any traditional pictorial formulas for the allegory of winter.

Crispijn also did not look to his own prints on the theme of winter, such as his engraving *Winter* (fig. 73) after the Flemish artist Maarten de Vos from ca. 1599-1600 as a model.<sup>187</sup> De Vos symbolized winter with the god of the winds, Aeolus, whom he surrounded with an ornamental border filled with animals and objects associated with food from a winter's hunt.<sup>188</sup> In another example, a series designed and engraved by Crispijn in 1604 represents each of the four seasons with a pair of

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<sup>187</sup> Veldman determined that this series must have been completed in 1599 or 1600 because it is dedicated "with friendship and respect" to the artist Joris Hoefnagel who died in 1600. Veldman, *Crispijn de Passe and His Progeny (1564-1670): A Century of Print Production*, 77. For a discussion of this print and the other three in its series, see Franken, *L'oeuvre gravé des van de Passe. Catalogue raisonné des estampes de Chrispijn senior et junior, Simon, Willem, Magdalena et Chrispijn III van de Passe, graveurs néerlandais des XVIe et XVIIe siècles. Précédé d'une introduction biographique, avec des listes chronologiques et alphabétiques. Augmenté d'un supplément d'additions et corrections par Simon Laschitzer*, 208; Veldman, "Seasons, Planets and Temperaments in the Work of Maarten van Heemskerck: Cosmo-Astrological Allegory in Sixteenth-Century Netherlandish Prints," 161.

<sup>188</sup> See Yvette Bruijnen and Paul Huys Janssen, *De Vier Jaargetijden in de kunst van de Nederlanden, 1500-1750*, 134-36, cat. no. 50.

gods: for *Winter* (fig. 74), he depicts Boreas, the north wind, and his wife Orithyia.<sup>189</sup> Moreover, in the print *Winter* under discussion, the artist turns away from the iconographic template he had developed in his own series of the twelve months from ca. 1590 based on designs by Maarten de Vos, which portray the months as genre scenes of activities relevant to the times of year. For example, in *January* (fig. 75), cheerful men and women sit around a table as they celebrate the Twelfth Night, marking the eve of Epiphany, otherwise known as *Driekoningendag* (Three Kings' Day).<sup>190</sup>

Two of Crispijn's other engravings, however, may in fact have influenced his design for *Winter*. His illustration, *Esau Selling Jacob His Birthright for a Mess of Pottage* (fig. 76), designed for his book, *Liber Genesis* (Book of Genesis), 1612, depicts a round-bottom kettle suspended from a wrought-iron trammel in the hearth similar to that in *Winter*. The curved niche and shelves lined with serving dishes displayed along the back wall of the room in the biblical image also closely resemble the same objects in *Winter*. Another design by Crispijn from the *Liber Genesis*, *Judah*

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<sup>189</sup> Veldman, *Crispijn de Passe and His Progeny (1564-1670): A Century of Print Production*, 121-22; Veldman, "Seasons, Planets and Temperaments in the Work of Maarten van Heemskerck: Cosmo-Astrological Allegory in Sixteenth-Century Netherlandish Prints," 162.

<sup>190</sup> In the seventeenth century, Twelfth Night was observed before the Epiphany on January 6, which commemorated the twelve days after the birth of Christ when the three magi visited the Holy Family bearing gifts. For a thorough discussion of the theme depicted in Dutch art, see Anke A. van Wagenberg-ter Hoeven, "The Celebration of Twelfth Night in Netherlandish Art," *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 22, no. 1/2 (1993-94): 65-96. Veldman notes that Van de Passe's interest in genre for his allegories originated from his influence by Goltzius's series on the five senses. Veldman, *Crispijn de Passe and His Progeny (1564-1670): A Century of Print Production*, 224.

*Making Advances to Tamar* (fig. 77), 1612, may also have informed his composition for *Winter*. Both works focus on young female figures who recline at the same oblique angle to the picture plane and who wear garments that expose their left breast and prominently marked, darkened nipple. While his illustrations for the *Liber Genesis* may have provided him with resolutions for some of his pictorial problems in *Winter*, none of them depict a family. Given the lack of family imagery in allegories of the seasons, Crispijn must have looked elsewhere for inspiration for the foreground of *Winter*.

For the household objects in *Winter*, Crispijn may have loosely based his composition on Pieter van der Heyden's engraving, *The Lean Kitchen* (fig. 78), 1563, after Pieter Bruegel. In both prints, a mother reclines with her child in a *bakermat* positioned at an angle to the picture plane. The left side of the room in both works is comprised of a wide hearth in which hangs a round-bottomed pot from an iron trammel in the center and an oil lamp at the left. However, the numerous differences between the prints in regard to their architectural spaces and their central narratives make clear that another model probably existed for Crispijn's *Winter*.

Only Maarten de Vos's *The Holy Family in Egypt Served by Angels* (fig. 79), engraved by Jan Sadeler I in 1581, provides a compelling connection to Crispijn's design for *Winter*. Its configuration of the main figures and the setting evokes a family at home. Both images feature a similar darkened architectural space that includes a roaring fire in a hearth at the left, a back wall decorated with a rounded niche and a shelf that holds serving dishes, and an open doorway at the right, which

reveals a luminous scene in the distant background. In the left side of both prints the artists depict a fire, a cat, and a round-bottomed kettle. Instead of the young boy seated at the left of the fire in Crispijn's print, De Vos depicts a crouching young angel holding a sheet of fabric in front of the fire. On the right side of both prints appear a partially opened sewing basket with linens draped over one side. Crispijn also evokes De Vos's round window protected with a cross-shaped bar over the open doorway in the right background with two shiny, round metal bowls displayed on a shelf over the doorway in his right background.

Most importantly, Mary dominates the center foreground of De Vos's *The Holy Family in Egypt Served by Angels* in the same way the mother does in Crispijn's *Winter*. Both female figures recline on a *bakermat* set at the same angle to the picture plane (although in reverse of one another). Mary in De Vos's engraving looks downward toward the Christ child in the same manner the mother does in Crispijn's image. The inclusion in each work of the *bakermat* underscores the significance of the family theme for both images. To my knowledge, De Vos's print is the earliest pictorial representation of a *bakermat* in the context of intimate family gatherings that focus on a mother and child. In addition, the print by De Vos is the only picture of this object depicted between 1581, the date Sadeler engraved the print, and the period in which Magdalena engraved *Winter*. The subsequent appearance of a *bakermat* in both prints strengthens the likelihood that Crispijn based his design on De Vos's *The Holy Family in Egypt Served by Angels*.

Crispijn and De Vos worked closely with one another on several projects in Antwerp where Crispijn began his artistic career. Further, Crispijn engraved several other prints after De Vos's designs. In 1581, shortly after the two artists began their professional relationship, Crispijn married De Vos's niece.<sup>191</sup> They produced a print series together with Philips Galle in 1586 and collaborated again for the Plantin publishing house between 1587 and 1588. Moreover, Crispijn based the majority of his prints on De Vos's designs not only during his tenure in Antwerp, but also in Cologne, where he moved in 1589, and in Utrecht. The close bonds between the two artists make it conceivable that Crispijn could have known De Vos's print of the Holy Family and used it as a model for *Winter*.

Although differences between the objects and figures certainly exist between Crispijn's *Winter* and Maarten de Vos's *The Holy Family in Egypt Served by Angels*, the shared subject of the prominent nuclear family takes precedence in their overall meaning. Crispijn does not depict, for example, De Vos's angels, a large cradle, a figure standing in the doorway above a stairway in the left background, or Joseph wielding an ax above a plank of wood in an outdoor setting in the right background. Still, none of the differences between the prints contradict the overt similarities in their architectural spaces, the central focus on the mother feeding her infant in a *bakermat*, or the concentration on the subject of a family.

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<sup>191</sup> Crispijn van de Passe's wife was most likely the niece of Maarten de Vos's wife, as suggested by Aernout van Buchelle. On the personal ties between the two artists and their professional collaborations, see Veldman, *Crispijn de Passe and His Progeny (1564-1670): A Century of Print Production*, 20, 28, 46-47.

Moreover, Crispijn's possible dependence upon De Vos's print as his primary model for *Winter* is underscored in another way. The engraving *Aegypti Commoratio* (Rest on the Flight into Egypt) (fig. 80) by the Flemish artist Joannes Galle for Hendrik van der Gracht's Catholic devotional guide, *Het leven van Sint Joseph* (The Life of Saint Joseph), published in 1689, clearly derives from De Vos's scene of the Holy Family.<sup>192</sup> Yet his replacement of an angel with the figure of Joseph fanning the flames of the hearth to Mary's right closely resembles the design of the figures in *Winter*. The old man in Crispijn's *Winter* compares to Joseph in Galle's illustration in that both are bearded, wear large hats, intently focus their gazes on the mother seated in the *bakermat* with the infant, and occupy a similar position between the roaring fire and mother. Thus, the strong similarities between *Winter*, De Vos's *The Holy Family in Egypt Served by Angels*, and Galle's *Aegypti Commoratio* support the hypothesis that Crispijn based his scene on De Vos's Holy Family. His secular group in a domestic interior contributed to a long, ongoing pictorial tradition. Thus, Netherlandish audiences would have readily associated the familiar depicted figures with those of the Holy Family.

By melding together three disparate themes into one scene in *Winter*—the personification of winter, a genre scene of a small family in a domestic setting, and the Holy Family—Crispijn would have substantially increased the marketability of the print to Utrecht's diverse, multiconfessional audience. As a Mennonite artist

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<sup>192</sup> Hendrik van der Gracht, *Het leven van Sint Joseph, Jesu voester-heer, in printjes vertoont, met digtjes verciert*. . . . (Antwerp: J. Galleus, 1689); W. C. M. Wüsterfeld, N. H. Koers, and M. L. Caron, *Rondom kerst. Prentkunst uit eigen bezit 1475-1750* (Utrecht: Stichting Het Catharijneconvent, 1990), 66-67, cat. no. 74.

working primarily for Catholic patrons in Antwerp, Cologne, and Utrecht, the latter of which was the Catholic bishopric of the Northern Netherlands, Crispijn frequently turned to Roman Catholic subjects, such as Mary, and integrated them with biblical inscriptions or secular imagery that would have also appealed to Protestants.<sup>193</sup> Protestants, such as Crispijn, who worked in predominately Catholic regions in the early period after the Reformation were forced to produce works for a diverse clientele. As Ilja Veldman argues, “Artists worked first and foremost for their daily bread, and had no scruples about accepting commissions from patrons of a different persuasion, nor about making images that would have been frowned upon by their coreligionists.”<sup>194</sup> Veldman points out that a Catholic viewer of a religious print would have responded positively to the Roman Catholic meaning in the scene while Protestants responded to the biblical verses inscribed beneath the images, this allowed artists to market a single print to both types of patrons.<sup>195</sup>

Certainly, Crispijn’s inscription below the family scene in *Winter*, about the season’s gloomy mood, would have appealed to a viewer primarily interested in secular themes. A Protestant might have recognized elements in the scene that share overt similarities with De Vos’s *The Holy Family in Egypt Served by Angels*, but the absence of a Roman Catholic message in its inscription could have sufficiently repressed the work’s embedded Marian iconography. On the other hand, the specific

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<sup>193</sup> Veldman, *Crispijn de Passe and His Progeny (1564-1670): A Century of Print Production*, 47.

<sup>194</sup> Ibid., 25.

<sup>195</sup> The series consists of nineteen images with Latin inscriptions. According to Veldman, the inscriptions that appeared with Crispijn’s religious allegories made the images suitable for wide audiences. Ibid., 110, 115.



choices Crispijn made reveal that *Winter* not only shares a visual resemblance to the De Vos composition, but also to his traditional Marian subject matter. Thus, the secular inscription in *Winter* and that inscription's divergence from the scene that obviously resembles De Vos's Holy Family creates a complex, multivalent meaning for the work that would have appealed to both Catholic and Protestant viewers.

### **Marian and Holy Family Iconography in Crispijn's *Winter***

Numerous details in Crispijn's *Winter* suggest that the family in the foreground can be understood as both the "Every" family and the Holy Family. The richly appointed domestic interior is filled with the typical household objects, fireplace, mantelpiece, wood paneling, and furniture that were common in seventeenth-century Dutch homes. These objects are preserved from the living quarters of the Haarlem brewery, "Het Scheepje" (The Little Ship) (fig. 81), which dates from ca. 1606.<sup>196</sup> In *Winter*, the tight-knit family nestled in the seventeenth-

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<sup>196</sup> The furnishings from "Het Scheepje" have been installed in the Philadelphia Museum of Art since 1930. For a detailed discussion of the history of the room and its contents, see Eda Diskant, "A Dutch Room of the Seventeenth Century in the Philadelphia Museum of Art," *Philadelphia Museum of Art Bulletin* 80, no. 341 (Winter, 1984): 1-24. The Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam and the Fries Museum in Leeuwarden, to name only two examples, are repositories for similar items of seventeenth-century Dutch furniture and material culture. For studies of the objects and furniture from the Republic, see Reinier Baarsen, *Dutch Furniture, 1600-1800* (Amsterdam and Zwolle: Rijksmuseum and Waanders Uitgevers, 1993); R. Meischke, *Het Nederlandse Woonhuis van 1300-1800* (Haarlem: Tjeen Willink, 1969). On the elaborate dollhouses that recreated the semblance of seventeenth-century Dutch homes, see Pijzel-Dommisse, *Het Hollandse Pronkpoppenhuis. Interieur en huishouden in de 17de en 18de eeuw*. On the recent discussions of prints and paintings that either authentically or imaginatively reconstruct the appearance of

century Netherlandish interior also resembles adults and children often depicted in Dutch genre imagery from the period. The old man in *Winter*, wearing a fur-trimmed hat and white ruff, leans forward from his chair to gaze upon the young mother, presumably his wife, holding her infant in the center foreground. A young boy sitting at the far left calls the viewer's attention to the mother and baby; his gender is evident by his short hairstyle similar to that of the boy to the right of an old woman in the engraving by Cornelis Visscher II, *The Pancake Baker* (fig. 82), ca. 1653.<sup>197</sup> The tender, adoring display of affection in *Winter* between mother and infant—the clear focus of the composition—becomes underscored by the baby's hand that reaches for her exposed breast.

In turn, viewers of *Winter* could have also recognized the family group in *Winter* as the Holy Family with elements that suggest a Eucharistic meaning for the print, such as the mother's breast. The mother, stretched out in the *bakermat* with her infant, evokes the iconography of Mary. Her semi-reclining pose in the woven *bakermat* on the floor recalls, for example, the Franciscan interpretation of Mary as the Madonna of Humility, which originated in the thirteenth century.<sup>198</sup> Her

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Dutch domestic interiors, see Mariët Westermann et al., *Art & Home: Dutch Interiors in the Age of Rembrandt* (Zwolle: Waanders Publishers, 2001), esp. 15, 46.

<sup>197</sup> On Visscher's print, see Eddy de Jongh and Ger Luijten, *Mirror of Everyday Life: Genreprints in the Netherlands, 1550-1700*, trans. Michael Hoyle (Amsterdam and Ghent: Rijksmuseum and Snoeck-Ducaju & Zoon, 1997), 315, fig. 1; Richard Musselwhite, Quincy Newell, and Carolyn H Wood, *Domesticating Virtue: Paintings, Prints and Piety in the Netherlands (1570-1680)* (Chapel Hill: Ackland Art Museum, 2001), 10.

<sup>198</sup> For the Madonna of Humility theme in late fourteenth-century art, see Beth Williamson, *The Madonna of Humility: Development, Dissemination and Reception, c. 1340-1400*, Bristol Studies in Medieval Cultures (Woodbridge, UK, and Rochester,

placement on the ground signified the Virgin's humble role as the poor and obedient devotee of Christ.<sup>199</sup> Given the long pictorial tradition of the Madonna of Humility iconography, Protestant viewers of *Winter* would have easily drawn a parallel between the mother and the humble figure of Mary. Such imagery continued to circulate in the seventeenth century, as exemplified by Rembrandt's painting, *The Holy Family* (Figure 57), ca. 1633-35. Protestant viewers might also have been aware of Franciscan theology from their contact with the large number of members of the order who lived in the Republic.<sup>200</sup>

In addition to the iconography of the Madonna of Humility suggested in *Winter*, her fully revealed breast, which calls attention to itself by virtue of its frontal, and therefore awkward angle, suggests the iconography of the *Maria Lactans* (Lactating Mary).<sup>201</sup> Breastfeeding seemingly has no particular relevance to the winter season, but is an element that figures prominently in Marian iconography as symbolic of Christ's humanity and the incarnation of God. Breastfeeding also became the topic of intense debate and scrutiny in the early modern era as moralists, such as Jacob Cats, and physicians, including Johan van Beverwijk, made cases for and

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NY: Boydell, 2009). I am grateful to Sally Cornelison for bringing this book to my attention.

<sup>199</sup> Artists first explored the Madonna of Humility theme in the fourteenth century during the development of the Franciscan order. Warner, *Alone of All Her Sex: The Myth and the Cult of the Virgin Mary*, 177-85, esp. 179-80. On the theme of the Madonna of Humility, see Millard Meiss, "The Madonna of Humility," *The Art Bulletin* 18, no. 4 (December 1936): 435-65.

<sup>200</sup> Valerie Hedquist, "Rembrandt and the Franciscan Order of Amsterdam," *Dutch Crossing* 18, no. 1 (Summer 1994): passim.

<sup>201</sup> Warner, *Alone of All Her Sex: The Myth and the Cult of the Virgin Mary*, 192-205, esp. 193-95.

against maternal breastfeeding, often citing Mary and the significance of her role as a mother in their supporting arguments.<sup>202</sup>

Images of *Maria Lactans* that prominently feature a single exposed breast accentuate the nurturing, spiritual relationship between Mary, the child, and the viewer. The second-century *Protevangelium Jacobi*, or Book of James, which contains many of the apocryphal details of Mary's life, emphasizes her role as the mother who provides nourishment to Christ through her own milk, "And it (the child) went and took the breast of his mother Mary."<sup>203</sup> Caroline Walker Bynum contends that works such as Robert Campin's *Madonna and Child before a Firescreen* (fig. 83), painted before 1430, which similarly display Mary's single, frontally exposed breast while the baby is held at the mother's side, indicate an offering of Mary's milk to the viewer. In turn, the viewer represents all of humanity that consumes her

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<sup>202</sup> Charlene Villaseñor Black, "The Moralized Breast in Early Modern Spain," in *The Material Culture of Sex, Procreation, and Marriage in Premodern Europe*, ed. Anne L. McClanan and Karen Rosoff Encarnación (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 193-96. On women breastfeeding in seventeenth-century Dutch art, see Franits, *Paragons of Virtue: Women and Domesticity in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Art*, 114-19. For Johan van Beverwijk's medical treatise advising women against feeding their children animal milk, see Johan van Beverwyck, "Schat der gesontheydt," in *Alle de wercken, zo in de medicyne als chirurgie van de heer Joan van Beverwyck* (Amsterdam: Jan Jacobz Schipper, 1656), 167. See also Franits, *Pieter de Hooch: A Woman Preparing Bread and Butter for a Boy*, 40; Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches: An Interpretation of Dutch Culture in the Golden Age*, 538; Westermann et al., *Art & Home: Dutch Interiors in the Age of Rembrandt*, 61, 137.

<sup>203</sup> Book of James 19:2. Montague Rhodes James, *The Apocryphal New Testament: Being The Apocryphal Gospels, Acts, Epistles And Apocalypses* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1926), 46. See also Warner, *Alone of All Her Sex: The Myth and the Cult of the Virgin Mary*, 193.

nourishment.<sup>204</sup> The unusual frontal position of the mother's breast in *Winter*, therefore, suggests that just as the milk from Mary's breast in traditional Roman Catholic imagery nurtures the devoted viewer, the milk from the mother in Crispijn's image can be similarly understood.

*Winter* also suggests the complex Marian iconography of the breast and its milk as the Eucharist. As in Campin's painting, Crispijn portrays the mother's breast in the middle of her chest protruding from her tight bodice as if it were her only breast. Also, the mother holds the body of the baby on her lap with his head next to, but not touching her breast, as also depicted in Campin's painting. Thus, both works have a possible Eucharistic meaning.

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<sup>204</sup> Bynum discusses the significance of blood in medieval theology as a substance that turned to milk after childbirth, thus providing food for a child. She contends that Christ's bleeding during his crucifixion releases humankind from sin because his blood offers a food source to his followers as symbolized in the Eucharist. Blood and the mother's milk, therefore, become equated with bodily fluids essential to the physical and spiritual nurturing of the soul offered by Mary and Christ. Bynum notes that Christ's blood in medieval devotion was associated with Mary's milk, and that his wound was referred to as a breast, which provides food and spiritual sustenance to his followers. Mary's breast and Christ's wound—referred to as the "double intercession" because of the suffering both Mary and Christ face at his crucifixion—therefore become common elements that appear vis-à-vis one another in numerous medieval works of art. Caroline Walker Bynum, "The Body of Christ in the Later Middle Ages: A Reply to Leo Steinberg," *Renaissance Quarterly* 39, no. 3 (Autumn 1986): 425; Caroline Walker Bynum, *Fragmentation and Redemption: Essays on Gender and the Human Body in Medieval Religion* (New York: Zone Books, 1991), 100, 102-3, 106. See also, Barbara G. Lane, *The Altar and Altarpiece: Sacramental Themes in Early Netherlandish Painting* (New York: Harper and Row, 1984), 6, 13-23; Carol J. Purtle, *The Marian Paintings of Jan van Eyck* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982), 98-126. On the relationship between food and the lactating Virgin, see E. James Mundy, "Gerard David's 'Rest on the Flight into Egypt': Further Additions to Grape Symbolism," *Simiolus* 12, no. 4 (1981-82): 211-22.

The juxtaposition of the mother's bare breast in *Winter* with the vessels displayed in the room and the grape-like cluster of tiny spheres that dangle from a shelf on the back wall further strengthens the potential Eucharistic iconography in the image (fig. 84). Vessels can denote Mary's function as the container for the Christ child, and grapes depicted in scenes of *Maria Lactans*, as E. James Mundy points out, can symbolize Mary as the vine that produced a child, her grape.<sup>205</sup> The grape provides the main ingredient for wine, which symbolizes the blood of Christ in Eucharistic imagery. Mundy posits that grapes, as a food source, could also refer to Mary's breasts, which provide nourishment to the child in the way that the Church does for humanity. The association between Mary's breasts and the Church derived from the popular twelfth-century Marian poem, the *Song of Songs* (7:7-8):

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<sup>205</sup> De Jongh cites two examples of Dutch poems that describe Mary as a vine. The first, by the sixteenth-century Dutch poetess, Anna Bijns, in her *Refereinen* (Refrains) reads: "Pure body, free of sinful stink, You have borne / The grape, whose wine, the sweetest drink, Reconciled the Pharaoh—oh fertile tendril . . ." The second, by Jacob van Maerlant, a medieval Dutch poet, reads: "You are the vineyard, the grape is your child." Anna Bijns, *Refereinen*. Edited by Willem Lodewijk van Helten (Rotterdam: J. H. Dunk, 1878), 4; Jacob van Maerlant, *Strophische gedichten*, ed. J. Verdam and P. Leendertz Jr. (Leiden: A. W. Sijthoff, 1918), 95. See Eddy de Jongh, "Grape Symbolism in Paintings of the 16th and 17th Centuries," *Simiolus* 7, no. 4 (1974): 184. For commentary on De Jongh's thesis and further interpretations of the grape in northern European art, see, Jan Baptist Bedaux, "Fruit and Fertility: Fruit Symbolism in Netherlandish Portraiture of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 17, no. 2/3 (1987): 150-68; Mundy, "Gerard David's 'Rest on the Flight into Egypt': Further Additions to Grape Symbolism," 216-17.

And your breasts shall be as clusters of the vine, for the breasts of the Church contain both wine and milk, with milk they nourish the simple, with wine they inebriate the wise. With its milk the Church nourishes her sons, with its wine, it makes joyous their minds and hearts. This wine gives wisdom, these fruitful chalices make the tongues of infants eloquent.<sup>206</sup>

The passage from the *Song of Songs* makes a clear association between breasts and clusters of grapes—both of which provide a source of food and nurturance for the recipient. Crispijn emphasizes the same concept in *Winter* by the grape-like cluster's placement on the shelf in the background, which, seen two-dimensionally, appears directly over the mother's head and her exposed breast. The grape-like cluster guides the viewer's gaze downward to the mother's exposed breast, reinforcing the possibility that the two elements of the image are iconographically related. Further, the grape-like cluster tops a vertical, compositional axis that extends downward to include the niche holding a vessel, the mother's head, her breast, the body of her infant, and the bowl holding a utensil at the bottom of the composition. The unified pattern of objects and figures in the composition serves to further underscore its Eucharistic meaning.

An alternative identification of the cluster over the mother's head in *Winter* could be a short plait of braided garlic stems in which the bulbs form a tight bunch. However, the cluster looks neither like a typically depicted garlic plait, such as that hanging from the top of the hearth in Pieter van der Heyden's *The Lean Kitchen*, nor like the one in Geertruydt Roghman's engraving, *Woman Cooking* (fig. 85), ca. 1648-

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<sup>206</sup> For the theological interpretation of grapes as the breasts of Mary, which was made popular by St. Bruno of Segni (ca. 1050-1123), the medieval theologian, and his interpretation of the *Song of Songs*, see Mundy, "Gerard David's 'Rest on the Flight into Egypt': Further Additions to Grape Symbolism," 216-17.

50. In contrast to garlic plaits, artists typically render grapes in clusters that taper at the bottom when hung from their stem, as does the object under discussion in Crispijn's *Winter*.<sup>207</sup> In light of their Eucharistic symbolism, grapes are a common motif in Marian imagery as a symbol of Christ's Passion, such as in Gerard David's painting, *The Rest on the Flight into Egypt* (fig. 86), ca. 1510. While garlic would have relevance to the stocked, working kitchen in *Winter*, the small spheres and the tapered shape of the dangling cluster must be identified as a bunch of grapes.

Other objects in the foreground of *Winter* lend themselves to the print's multivalent readings as an allegory of a season and as the secularized Holy Family: a wicker basket containing linens, a partially unwound device to hold wool or thread, and a shallow bowl and spoon needed to feed the infant. At the right, a slightly opened woven basket with light-colored fabric draped against its side may allude to one of Mary's most common attributes—a basket used to hold sewing or weaving supplies—which are often included in scenes of the Annunciation and the Holy Family.<sup>208</sup> Depictions of Mary accompanied by spinning, weaving, and sewing tools, such as spindles, bobbins, thread, and spun wool, are among the most common for the

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<sup>207</sup> The cluster depicted in *Winter* may also represent dates, which artists traditionally represent hanging from a palm tree in scenes of the Flight into Egypt. The spheres in Crispijn's print, however, each have puckered bottoms, unlike dates, and seem too large, spherical, and tightly connected for them to be identified conclusively as dates.

<sup>208</sup> Mâle, *L'art religieux après le Concile de Trente*, 354. For an example of this theme in seventeenth-century Italy, refer to Judith Mann's excellent study of Guido Reni's *Virgin Sewing in the Temple*, 1610. Judith W. Mann, "The Annunciation Chapel in the Quirinal Palace, Rome: Paul V, Guido Reni, and the Virgin Mary," *The Art Bulletin* 74, no. 1 (March 1993): 118 n. 15.



theme.<sup>209</sup> The prominent display of sewing-related objects in *Winter* calls into question their meaning in light of their irrelevance to the established attributes of the winter season.

Such images as Crispijn's *Winter*, in which a young woman with sewing supplies connotes household labors, and the fastidious attention paid to domestic handwork activities, typically evoke Mary.<sup>210</sup> Her traditional association with sewing and spinning became popular in art produced after 900 based on the apocryphal narratives that described her childhood in a temple where she wove a veil for the tabernacle.<sup>211</sup> In Hendrick Goltzius's widely circulated engraving, the *Annunciation* (fig. 87), 1594, from his *Life of the Virgin*, the artist places a shallow woven basket filled with fabric and a pair of scissors in the center foreground directly below the

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<sup>209</sup> Artists often portray Mary with sewing and weaving items to signify her typological role as the "new Eve" in light of Eve's task to spin wool or nurture her children after the expulsion from Paradise while Adam, in turn, dug the earth.

<sup>210</sup> Gail McMurray Gibson, "The Thread of Life in the Hand of the Virgin," in *Silvia Heyden: Recent Tapestries*, ed. William S. Hecksher (Durham: Duke University Museum of Art, 1972), 9-15; R. L. Wyss, "Die Handarbeiten der Maria. Eine ikonographische Studie unter Berücksichtigung der textilen Techniken," in *Artes minores. Dank an Werner Abegg*, ed. Michael Stettler and Mechthild Flury-Lemberg (Bern: Stämpfli, 1973), 133-88; Cynthia Hahn, "'Joseph Will Perfect, Mary Enlighten and Jesus Save Thee': The Holy Family as Marriage Model in the Mérode Triptych," *The Art Bulletin* 68, no. 1 (March 1986): 64 nn. 71, 74.

<sup>211</sup> The narrative derives from the *Book of James* 10:1, which dates from the first or second century. Warner, *Alone of All Her Sex: The Myth and the Cult of the Virgin Mary*, 27, 29. Images of Mary with sewing or spinning materials narrate an event told in the Infancy Gospel of James (10:1-10). Melissa R. Katz, "Regarding Mary: Women's Lives Reflected in the Virgin's Image," 38; Mann, "The Annunciation Chapel in the Quirinal Palace, Rome: Paul V, Guido Reni, and the Virgin Mary," 118. On the relationship between Mary's virtues and the act of sewing or spinning in the Mérode Triptych, see Margaret B. Freeman, "The Iconography of the Merode Altarpiece," *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin, New Series* 16, no. 4 (December 1957): 138.

kneeling Virgin. Similarly, Crispijn's image constructs a visual relationship between the mother and her basket in the same manner.<sup>212</sup>

In Crispijn's print, an object in the center foreground related to the sewing basket either represents a drop spindle or a spool around which a length of soft, thick wool roving or thread is partly wound.<sup>213</sup> The object looks like a common spool, which is a rod that connects two round discs at either end, as Geertruydt Roghman depicts in her print, *Woman Spinning* (fig. 88), ca. 1648-50.<sup>214</sup> The object could also represent a drop spindle, which is a rod with one round disc used for spinning thick, wool roving into thread or yarn. A drop spindle is depicted, for example, dangling from a cord of wool held by a female figure seated in the center of Dirck Volkertsz Coornhert's engraving after Maarten van Heemskerck, *The Virtuous Wife Spinning* (fig. 89), from the series *Praise of the Virtuous Wife*, 1555.<sup>215</sup> The thickness and

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<sup>212</sup> For the association of sewing and weaving handicrafts with womanly virtues and industry in Renaissance Italy, see Marta Ajmar-Wollheim and Flora Dennis, *At Home in Renaissance Italy* (London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 2006). I am grateful to Sally Cornelison for suggesting this book to me.

<sup>213</sup> Evert van Straaten identified the cylindrical object in *Winter* as a roll of bandages (*zwachtels*), but the relevance of bandages in an image of the personification of winter, as he interpreted it, seems highly unlikely. If the print is understood as a scene of the Holy Family, as I argue, bandages could refer to Christ's Passion. Van Straaten, *Koud tot op het bot: de verbeelding van de winter in de zestiende en zeventiende eeuw in de nederlanden*, 20.

<sup>214</sup> On Roghman's image and the other five engravings from this series of women working in the home, see De Jongh and Luijten, *Mirror of Everyday Life: Genreprints in the Netherlands, 1550-1700*, 268-71; Martha Moffitt Peacock, "Geertruydt Roghman and the Female Perspective in 17th-Century Dutch Genre Imagery," *Woman's Art Journal* 14, no. 2 (Autumn 1993-Winter 1994): esp. 6.

<sup>215</sup> On Coornhert's print, see Veldman, *Images for the Eye and Soul: Function and Meaning in Netherlandish Prints (1450-1650)*, 155, fig. 135; Ilja M. Veldman, "Lessons for Ladies: A Selection of Sixteenth and Seventeenth-Century Dutch

roundness of the soft material coiled around the cylindrical object in *Winter*, whether it be identified as a spool, spindle, or bobbin, resembles wool roving of the type represented in the examples by Roghman and Coornhert that might relate to the sewing basket at the mother's left. In addition, the object's placement at the foot of the *bakermat* highlights its relevance to the woman and her role as the family's matriarch. At the same time, the object evokes Mary's virtues as mother and homemaker.

The remaining figures in *Winter* also suggest Marian and Holy Family symbolism. Positioned between the hearth at the far left and the mother's *bakermat* sits a boy in a small chair with a cat in his lap. He looks over his right shoulder to smile directly at the viewer and points toward the mother and child. The cat is an animal typical in images of the Holy Family, such as in Rembrandt's *The Virgin and Child with the Cat and the Snake* (fig. 90), 1654. The cat in *Winter* could refer to the *gatto della Madonna* (Cat of the Madonna), which supposedly delivered a litter of kittens in a stable nearby as Mary gave birth to Christ.<sup>216</sup>

On the other side of the mother, the curled up dog lying beside her *bakermat* could represent an ordinary household pet. The dog could also symbolize the virtue of fidelity (*fides*) in the bonds of the sacred marriage between Mary and Joseph, and by

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Prints," *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 16, no. 2/3 (1986): 115.

<sup>216</sup> George Ferguson, *Signs and Symbols in Christian Art* (London, Oxford, and New York: Oxford University Press, 1961), 13.

extension, humanity's expected faithfulness to the Church.<sup>217</sup> Thus the dog may clarify the relationship of the old man and woman. Additionally the dog may signal the viewer's responsibility to venerate the father, mother, and infant literally as the Holy Family and to revere their virtues and spirituality.

The boy holding the cat also suggests more than merely a representation of a child. His pointing gesture to the infant in his mother's arms invokes the figure of the young John the Baptist whom artists often include in Holy Family scenes. Typically in these pictures, the Baptist points to or touches the Christ child, as he does in the painting by Peter Paul Rubens, *The Virgin and Child with St. Elizabeth and the Child Baptist* (fig. 91), ca. 1630-35. The pronounced gesture the Baptist makes toward the infant Christ, as in Bernardino di Betto di Biago's (known as Pintoricchio), *Virgin and Child with the Infant Saint John the Baptist and Saints Andrew and Jerome* (fig. 92), ca. 1495-1500, theologically signifies his recognition of the child as humanity's redeemer. Thus, the Baptist declares: "Behold the Lamb of God" (John 1:29).<sup>218</sup> In *Winter*, the boy smiles and points to the suckling infant as he gazes directly toward the viewer over his shoulder. Thus, he calls the viewer's attention to the welcome

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<sup>217</sup> On the representation of dogs in Marian imagery, see William S. Heckscher, *The Annunciation of the Mérode Altarpiece: An Iconographic Study*, vol. 1, Miscellanea Jozef Duverger. Bijdragen tot de Kunstgeschiedenis der Nederlanden (Ghent: Vereniging voor de Geschiedenis der Textielkunsten, 1968).

<sup>218</sup> See Lilian Armstrong's analysis of John the Baptist pointing toward Christ in Pintoricchio's painting. Katz, "Regarding Mary: Women's Lives Reflected in the Virgin's Image," 174, cat. no. 10. For a brief discussion of John the Baptist as the best man to the bridegroom, Christ, see Warner, *Alone of All Her Sex: The Myth and the Cult of the Virgin Mary*, 124.

presence of the baby with a gesture that helps us to identify the boy as the Baptist and, in turn, the mother as Mary.

In *Winter*, the intimate relationship between the young mother and old man signals that they embody an alternate or additional meaning beyond the personification of a season. The man's old age suggests his identity as Joseph, Mary's husband and Christ's foster father.<sup>219</sup> Since the rise of the cult of Joseph in the early fifteenth century, artists typically portrayed Joseph as an old man who was non-threatening to Mary's virginity. Similarly, an old man typically personified winter, as in Crispijn's print.<sup>220</sup> The old, bearded male in the center of the composition fulfills

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<sup>219</sup> For recent studies of Joseph and his cult in early modern Spain and Renaissance Italy, see Charlene Villaseñor Black, *Creating the Cult of St. Joseph: Art and Gender in the Spanish Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005); Carolyn C. Wilson, *St. Joseph in Italian Renaissance Society and Art: New Directions and Interpretations* (Philadelphia: Saint Joseph's University Press, 2001).

<sup>220</sup> According to Cynthia Hahn, Joseph's representation in medieval art ranged from an "old, tired buffoon, a butt of jokes" to the "hard-working foster-father of Christ, the worthy companion and helpmate to Mary, and the strong, capable head of his household." Cynthia Hahn, "'Joseph Will Perfect, Mary Enlighten and Jesus Save Thee': The Holy Family as Marriage Model in the Mérode Triptych," 55-56, 58. See also, Marjory Bolger Foster, "The Iconography of St. Joseph in Netherlandish Art, 1400-1550" (Ph.D. diss., University of Kansas, 1978). The sermons delivered by the medieval theologian, Jean Gerson, about Joseph's unique role in the Holy Family contributed to the development of his cult in the fifteenth century. Devotion to Joseph and the Holy Family became widespread after the Council of Trent particularly as a result of the sermons and theological literature by Ignatius of Loyola that promoted Joseph in addition to Teresa of Ávila and Francis de Sales. Hahn, "'Joseph Will Perfect, Mary Enlighten and Jesus Save Thee': The Holy Family as Marriage Model in the Mérode Triptych," 56; Katz, "Regarding Mary: Women's Lives Reflected in the Virgin's Image," 63. In the seventeenth century, Loyola encouraged the readers of his *Spiritual Exercises* to devote themselves to the Holy Family; Teresa of Ávila established monasteries dedicated to the worship of Joseph and the Holy Family; and De Sales urged his followers to practice virtuous married and family lives due to his understanding that the heart of Jesus becomes "enlivened" through earthly relationships. Joseph F. Chorpennig, ed., *The Holy Family in Art and Devotion*

his role in the family as husband and father. The pinnacle of a pyramidal composition is formed by the figure of the old man, who sits beside a blazing fire with his hand shielding his family from the hot flames. His gesture readily identifies him as the child's guardian and the family patriarch. Given the complexity of the old man's relationship to the family, which has no relevance to the winter season, his primary identification as Joseph seems most compelling.

The identification of the old man in *Winter* as Joseph can be further substantiated by other elements in the print. The fire in the hearth is an attribute of both the winter season and Joseph. Cynthia Hahn identifies the fireplace as one of Joseph's main attributes since the medieval period. His association with fire in general derives from Luke 12:49, in which Joseph declares: "I have come to cast fire upon the earth."<sup>221</sup> Thus, Joseph's close association with the symbol of fire has a strong influence on the iconographic meaning of the flames and fireplace in *Winter*.

Although artists often include a fireplace when they personify winter as an old man, the fireplace in *Winter* is not the focus of the elderly figure. He neither looks at the fire nor appears to warm his hands or feet purposefully by it. Rather, the physical separation he makes with his hand between the fire and the mother, coupled with his

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(Philadelphia: Saint Joseph's University Press, 1998), viii. On Joseph's cult, see Clarissa W. Atkinson, Constance H. Buchanan, and Margaret R. Miles, eds., *Immaculate and Powerful: The Female in Sacred Image and Social Reality* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1985), 152; Georges Duby, ed., *A History of Private Life: Revelations of the Medieval World* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1988), 2:124-36; Katz, "Regarding Mary: Women's Lives Reflected in the Virgin's Image," 63.

<sup>221</sup> Hahn, "'Joseph Will Perfect, Mary Enlighten and Jesus Save Thee': The Holy Family as Marriage Model in the Mérode Triptych," 60. See also Carra Ferguson O'Meara, "'In the Hearth of the Virginal Womb': The Iconography of the Holocaust in Late Medieval Art," *The Art Bulletin* 63, no. 1 (March 1981): 75-88.

direct gaze toward the infant, suggest a richer meaning for the fire than simply a connotation of cold weather.

If the fire from the hearth in Crispijn's *Winter* is symbolic of Joseph's responsibility as a caretaker and protector, the large, sealed pot that hangs from a wrought-iron trammel in the hearth consequently symbolizes Mary's virginity and her Immaculate Conception that made possible the miracle of the Incarnation. The pot, viewers can reasonably assume, is filled with the same food for the infant in the shallow bowl beside the *bakermat* on the floor. As Carra O'Meara has shown, in medieval Marian imagery, the fireplace, which can perfectly bake bread, is analogous to the nurturing womb of the Virgin, the vessel for the Incarnation and a symbol of the Eucharist.<sup>222</sup> Thus, O'Meara argues that the fireplace behind the Virgin and child in Campin's *Madonna and Child before a Firescreen* (Figure 83), symbolizes the "hearth of the virginal womb" because Mary holds the child just as the hearth contains fire.<sup>223</sup> In *Winter*, the mother's proximity to the blazing heat in the fireplace and her sense of calm, despite its unusually tall, flickering flames, suggest that she sits in no ordinary domestic space.

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<sup>222</sup> O'Meara, "'In the Hearth of the Virginal Womb': The Iconography of the Holocaust in Late Medieval Art," 82, 86.

<sup>223</sup> O'Meara notes that in Campin's *Madonna and Child before a Firescreen*, the hearth does not contain a fire, so the hearth itself symbolizes the Old Law of the Old Testament and the child symbolizes the New Law and an illumination of the Sacrament of the Eucharist. Such a reading does not apply to Crispijn's *Winter* because the hearth in the composition contains a fire, which directly connects with Joseph's figure based on his placement in the composition. Therefore, the fire in the print does not seem to suggest the Old Testament, but instead relates to Joseph and his role in the Holy Family. For Medieval theological concepts of light as symbolic of Christ, see *Ibid.*, 83 nn. 39, 43, 44.

While hearths are certainly common pictorial motifs in Netherlandish images of domestic interiors, the fire in *Winter* as merely a convenient source of light is also called into question by a lit oil lamp depicted within the blaze (fig. 93). Crispijn's preliminary drawing for the engraving dramatically pronounces the flame radiating from the mouth of the lamp (fig. 94). Although Dutch artists often depicted lit oil lamps hung in hearths, as in Gerard Valck's late seventeenth-century mezzotint, *Woman Searching for Fleas* (fig. 95), no Netherlandish pictorial precedent exists, to my knowledge, of an oil lamp emitting light from within an already roaring fireplace. The lit oil lamp thus presents an interpretive problem because a duplicate source of light would be completely unnecessary in an active hearth. Given the iconography of oil lamps in religious imagery as traditional symbols of God's grace, the superfluity of the lamp in *Winter* supports the identification of the old man as Joseph and the fire as one of his attributes.<sup>224</sup>

In sum, the seemingly ordinary articles of everyday domestic life in *Winter* embody a new and powerful meaning. The fire denotes Joseph's guardianship of Mary and the Christ child; the covered pot signifies Mary's virginity and her role in the Incarnation of God; and the light has complex associations with the members of the Holy Family. Thus the fire, pot, and oil lamp in the hearth support the identification of the three figures seated beside it as those of the Holy Family. By foregrounding the Holy Family in his composition Crispijn introduced a new pictorial

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<sup>224</sup> Ferguson, *Signs and Symbols in Christian Art*, 43. On the use of oil in last sacrament of extreme unction, refer to the chapter in this dissertation on Rembrandt's etching, *The Death of the Virgin*, 1639.



formula, a reformed standard for the Holy Family's secularized representation that other artists freely adopted in the following decades.

### **The *Bakermat* and the Domestication of the Holy Family in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Art after 1630**

Crispijn van de Passe's contextualization of the family in *Winter* in a believable Netherlandish domestic setting with trappings that evoke the visual tradition of Holy Family iconography anticipates Mary's transformation in Dutch art by the 1630s from the celestial Queen of Heaven to a secular Everywoman. After the publication of *Winter*, the formulaic depiction of Mary as an ethereal, spiritual figure in art began to wane. Crispijn's conception of the mother with her family—suggestive of the Holy Family—in a typical Dutch interior effectively reimagined Mary as a common Dutch woman. The key article of Dutch material culture in Crispijn's scene that facilitated her makeover is the *bakermat*. The nursing couch functions as the dominant pictorial denominator of Netherlandish scenes that either overtly or subtly represent a woman in the guise of Mary. Such images begin with Maarten de Vos's 1581 print of the Holy Family and extend to the numerous overtly secular *and* quasi-sacred Dutch images of mothers with their infants produced throughout the seventeenth century. Thus, the impact of Crispijn's *Winter* on Mary's remarkable reinvention as a secularized mother in Dutch visual culture can be demonstrated by contrasting *Winter* with traditional Marian imagery in Netherlandish art of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.

In *The Virgin in the Glory on a Crescent* (Figure 56), for example, an engraving dated 1607 by Jacob Matham after Abraham Bloemaert, Mary assumes the likeness of the Queen of Heaven—a distinctive difference from the mother’s depiction in Crispijn’s *Winter*. Based on Albrecht Dürer’s title page (fig. 96) for his series the *Life of the Virgin*, 1502-11, Bloemaert’s print portrays Mary with brilliant rays of light emanating from her head in a billowy cloudscape. Her bulky figure, seated on clouds with her left bare foot gently resting on a slender crescent moon, dominates the center of the oval framework formed by clouds and putti.<sup>225</sup> The Christ child, lying across Mary’s broad lap, foreshadows his own death and entombment through his horizontal pose. Through the child, the artist underscores Mary’s role in the Incarnation. Mary’s halo of seven stars encircling her head defines her not only as the Queen of Heaven, but also as the *Mater Dolorosa* (Mother of Sorrows). The Counter-Reformation Church under Pope Paul V (1605-21) ended the long debate about the number of sorrows that Mary suffered over the death of Christ by officially establishing that there were exactly seven. Mary’s sorrows begin with the prophecy of Simeon and end with Christ’s Entombment, which Matham signifies in his print through the stars around the Virgin’s head.<sup>226</sup> The Latin inscription beneath the print

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<sup>225</sup> Marina Warner explains that the crescent moon beneath Mary signifies the Immaculate Conception based on prophecy in Revelation 12:1 of the “great wonder,” which was “clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars.” Warner also argues that the moon evokes pagan symbolism of female divinities that were appropriated by the medieval Church. Warner, *Alone of All Her Sex: The Myth and the Cult of the Virgin Mary*, 255-69, esp. 256.

<sup>226</sup> J. C. Broussole, *Études sur la sainte Vierge* (Paris: Téqui, 1908), 2:324, cited in Warner, *Alone of All Her Sex: The Myth and the Cult of the Virgin Mary*, 218, 382 n. 26.

begins with the words, “Virgo Parens” (Virgin Parent), which establishes Mary’s purity, and thus her worthiness to bear the Christ child. Mary’s status as a virgin—a woman superior above all others—was the traditional way in which she was perceived in art and theological literature before Crispijn’s *Winter*.

Shortly after the publication of *Winter*, the *bakermat* surfaced in a wide variety of Dutch images, including Rembrandt’s ca. 1638 sketch of a woman, possibly of his wife Saskia, lying in bed with a long *bakermat* placed beside her on the floor (fig. 97). The *bakermat* reappeared in Adriaen van Ostade’s pen and ink drawing, *A Family at the Hearth* (fig. 98), ca. 1647-55, which resembles the earlier De Vos scene of the Holy Family, particularly in its depiction of a figure holding a sheet of fabric to the flames in the hearth.<sup>227</sup> The old man resting his head on his clenched fist and the small boy seated beside him in Van Ostade’s drawing, however, suggest he may have based his work directly on Crispijn’s print and not that by De Vos. Given the likelihood that Crispin’s *Winter* is the first Dutch representation of a mother and child in a *bakermat* and the work’s striking similarity to the drawing by Van Ostade, Crispijn’s image could have served as the origin of the transformation from the secularized Holy Family to the secular family in Dutch art.

Aside from Crispijn’s *Winter*, one of the first Dutch images to represent a mother with her infant in a *bakermat* was engraved by Magdalena van de Passe’s older brother, Willem van de Passe. His illustration, after a design by Adriaen van de

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<sup>227</sup> Peter Schatborn, *Dutch Genre Drawings of the Seventeenth Century* (Meriden, CT: The Meriden Gravure Company and The Stinehour Press, 1972), 50, cat. no. 74.

Venne, of a young mother wiping her baby's bottom in a *bakermat*, appeared in Johan de Brune's emblem book, *Emblemata of Zinne-Werck* (Emblems or Meaning-Work) (fig. 99), published in 1624 in Amsterdam.<sup>228</sup> The emblem, entitled "This body, what is it, but stink and dung?" draws a correlation between the baby's dirty bottom and the pointlessness of human vanity; this serves to remind the viewer of proper moral behavior. The *bakermat* in De Brune's print, like the one in Crispijn's *Winter*, provides a clear focal point for the composition and thus serves as a significant element of the scene.

De Brune's emblem quotes the central compositional area of the domestic interior and the group of the mother, child, and *bakermat* in *Winter*, which suggests that either Willem van de Passe or the original designer, Adriaen van de Venne, drew inspiration directly from *Winter*. The composition focuses on the strongly lit figures of the mother and child who wear lace headpieces that simulate radiating light from their heads in the way seen often in images of Mary and the Christ child. As in *Winter*, to the left of the cozy, darkened room, a large hearth with a roaring fire illuminates the space. A candle displayed on a triangular table in the immediate left foreground next to the fire also radiates light, similar to the unexpected use of the small oil lamp in the hearth in *Winter*. To the right of the *bakermat* lies a dog curled up next to a wicker basket. In the far right background appears a closed door in the same location as the open doorway in *Winter*. The multiple copies produced of Johan

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<sup>228</sup> Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches: An Interpretation of Dutch Culture in the Golden Age*, 481-82; Mariët Westermann, *A Worldly Art: The Dutch Republic, 1585-1718* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1996), 55-56.

de Brune's emblem book may have helped to familiarize his Protestant audience with the pictorial formula for the depiction of a family and the evoked Marian iconography that Crispijn first introduced.

Well-known domestic etiquette guides, published in the seventeenth century, also drew upon the representation of the family, and by extension, Crispijn's *Winter*. For example, the frontispiece of Petrus Wittewrongel's 1661 handbook for Protestant women, *Oeconomia Christiana ofte Christelicke huys-houdinghe* (*Oeconomia Christiana* or the Christian Household), portrayed a mother nursing her newborn infant in a *bakermat* next to a prominent hearth (fig. 100). The father, identified by his tall hat in much the same way Crispijn emphasized the old man in *Winter*, sits at a table nearby with his other children in a cozy domestic interior. In the upper center of the composition, a prominently depicted mother holding her small infant presides over the vignettes below. The scene illustrates a mother's responsibility, like that of Mary, to mediate between religiosity, depicted in the scenes on the left, and domestic life, represented on the right.

The secular, nursing mother in Wittewrongel's frontispiece, a symbol of Marian piety and virtuosity, also appears in Gijsbert Sibilla's painting, *A Service at the Church of St. Laurence in Weesp* (fig. 101), ca. 1635.<sup>229</sup> One of the largest and most prominent figures in Sibilla's crowded church interior—a mother cradling her suckling infant in the immediate right foreground—sits directly beneath a male figure

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<sup>229</sup> On the painting, see Henri Defoer et al., *Goddelijk geschilderd. Honderd meesterwerken van Museum Catharijneconvent* (Utrecht and Zwolle: Museum Catharijneconvent and Waanders, 2003), 192-94.

in a pew, identifiable as the celebrated Dutch Protestant poet, Pieter Cornelisz Hooft.<sup>230</sup> Given the mother's juxtaposition with Hooft, Rudolf Dekker posits that her act of feeding the infant may symbolize the spiritual nourishment received by the large Reformed congregation through the reading of the Gospels.<sup>231</sup> By aligning Hooft with the mother in a pose that resembles the iconic image of Mary suckling the Christ child, Sibilla powerfully reclaims the Roman Catholic exemplar for a Protestant purpose. The appropriated image underscores the assumption of Catholic political power by the Reformed Church in the Dutch city of Weesp.<sup>232</sup> Sibilla's evocation of Mary in his nursing mother suggests the transformation of the Virgin in

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<sup>230</sup> De Jongh notes that Sibilla served as an alderman for the municipal government of Weesp and as the city's mayor. Thus he played an active role in the city's Protestant milieu. His painting probably depicts other people who would have been recognizable to seventeenth-century Dutch viewers, De Jongh states, including the minister and the women wearing black at the left of the composition. Eddy de Jongh, *Faces of the Golden Age: Seventeenth-Century Dutch Portraits*, ed. Marjolein de Boer, trans. Nicolene Gatehouse, Jennifer Kilian, and Katy Kist, English Supplement ed. (The Hague: Rijksdienst Beeldende Kunst, 1994), 58. In addition to his work as a poet, Hooft most notably served in public office in Weesp and was a representative of the States of Holland. On Hooft, see R. E. O. Ekkart, "De portretten van Pieter Cornelisz. Hooft," in *De briefwisseling van Pieter Corneliszoon Hooft*, ed. H. W. van Tricht (Culemborg: Tjeenk Willink, 1976-79), 5-21; H. W. van Tricht, *Het leven van P. C. Hooft* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1951).

<sup>231</sup> Rudolf M. Dekker, *Childhood, Memory and Autobiography in Holland: From the Golden Age to Romanticism* (London and New York: Macmillan Press Ltd. and St. Martin's Press, Inc., 2000), 92.

<sup>232</sup> De Jongh notes that one of Hooft's major contributions to the city of Weesp was to restructure its town council as a means to reduce the number of Catholics serving as town councilors. The purpose of this tactic was to decrease the influence of Catholicism in a city that was predominately Catholic. On Hooft's political maneuvering on behalf of the States of Holland to suppress the Catholic presence in Weesp's political affairs, see Van Tricht, *Het leven van P. C. Hooft*, 124-26. See also H. Brood, "Het stadsbestuur van Weesp," *Tussen Vecht en Eem* 11, no. 81 (1980): 5, 8-9; De Jongh, *Faces of the Golden Age: Seventeenth-Century Dutch Portraits*, 58.

seventeenth-century Dutch art from a Roman Catholic saint to a secular figure that we can trace back to Crispijn's *Winter*. In turn, the pictorial formula established by Sibilla and others, in which the depiction of a Netherlandish mother and child resemble Mary and the Christ child paralleled the development of Dutch representations of the Holy Family with increasingly secularized attributes, thus further blurring the distinction between the Holy and secular family.

The Bloemaert family of artists was the first to represent the clearly identifiable Holy Family as a contemporaneous Dutch mother, husband, and infant in seventeenth-century art. By blurring the distinction between the Holy and "Every" family, their imagery allowed such figures to be understood as either sacred or secular, or simultaneously as both. For example, Jacques de Gheyn's ca. 1590-95 engravings after Abraham Bloemaert's portrait-like depictions of the Holy Family exclude any otherworldly attributes, such as haloes (fig. 102). Similarly, Abraham's son Hendrick represented Mary and Joseph as an ordinary poor couple with a baby in his 1631 pendant paintings (fig. 103). Hendrick Bloemaert's portrayal of the veiled mother and the old man adoring a child clearly identifies them as Mary and Joseph, yet he also omits celestial attributes, emphasizing their likeness to a secular family and deemphasizing their iconic stature.

The positive reception of Hendrick Bloemaert's 1631 pendants of the Holy Family can be measured by the numerous similar works on the theme that artists produced in the following years. In 1632, for example, Abraham Bloemaert painted the Holy Family as secular figures in a believable, rustic barn setting in *Rest on the*

*Flight into Egypt* (fig. 104). The painting reproduces many of the same everyday household objects that Crispijn first incorporated in *Winter*. Bloemaert included, for example, a large hearth with a fire, and a pot hooked on an iron trammel for cooking that shares similarities with the tapered object in the background of Crispijn's print. In the foreground of Bloemaert's painting, Mary holds the child in her arms away from her breast to connote the Eucharist, as seen in Crispijn's *Winter*. In Bloemaert's painting, Joseph stands directly behind Mary while he observes her and the Christ child. To the right of Mary, Bloemaert depicts an open sewing basket and a dog. The similarities between *Winter* and Bloemaert's painting suggest that he may have drawn inspiration directly from the earlier print.

The probable impact of Crispijn's *Winter* on Holy Family imagery by Rembrandt and his circle from the 1630s and 1640s supports the argument for multivalent readings of the group as sacred and/or secular. Rembrandt's painting of the Holy Family (Figure 57), ca. 1633-35, focuses on the family in the center of a dark, cozy interior space. Mary holds the Christ child in her arms away from her breast while Joseph quietly observes the mother and infant in the background. She angles the child's feet toward a bright light source at the left side, which suggests a fireplace beyond the picture frame. Similarly, in his etching *The Holy Family* (fig. 105), ca. 1632, Rembrandt places the figures in a dark, shallow domestic interior with the child suckling at Mary's breast. In the background immediately behind her sits Joseph reading a book, which ought to be identified as the Bible given the sacred subject of the scene. Books allusive of the Bible, though ahistorical, often appear in



Holy Family scenes as a means of sanctifying the figures and the space they occupy. To the right of Mary appears one of her attributes, an open sewing basket. Another example by Rembrandt, *The Holy Family* (fig. 106), 1645, also resembles Crispijn's *Winter*.

The formulaic treatment by Rembrandt of the secularized Holy Family, traceable to Crispijn's *Winter* may also have influenced Adriaen van Ostade's scenes of peasant mothers, fathers, and children. Van Ostade's previously discussed drawing, *A Family at the Hearth*, clearly quotes from Crispijn and is similar to Rembrandt's later conceptions in its focus on a mother and infant in a *bakermat* beside a hearth fire, with a father and small boy sitting nearby. Leonard J. Slatkes specifically discussed Van Ostade's dependence on Rembrandt's Holy Family imagery; he posited that Van Ostade must have based his 1648 etching, *The Pater Familias* (fig. 107), directly on Rembrandt's Holy Family imagery from the 1640s. Van Ostade would have been inspired, for example, by Rembrandt's emphasis on the Holy Family's domesticity in his 1645 painting in St. Petersburg, *The Holy Family*. Slatkes argued that no artist other than Rembrandt infused "a warm and intimate mood" in pictures of mothers with children; he wrote, "It is likely that these depictions by Van Ostade represent a transformation of Rembrandt's religiously oriented intimacy into pure genre themes."<sup>233</sup> We may surmise that the Holy-Family iconography in secular family themes in Van Ostade's 1640s imagery was derived in part from Rembrandt's

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<sup>233</sup> Peter van der Coelen et al., *Everyday Life in Holland's Golden Age. The Complete Etchings of Adriaen van Ostade*, ed. Peter van der Coelen (Amsterdam: Museum Het Rembrandthuis and the Rembrandt Information Centre, 1998), 137, cat. no. 34.

conception of Holy Family figures in domestic interiors. Rembrandt's conception, in turn, can be traced to Crispijn's *Winter*. Thus, our ability to interpret a family grouping in Dutch imagery from the first half of the seventeenth century as sacred and/or secular is dependent upon the appearance of a prescribed pictorial vocabulary, including, but not limited to, a *bakermat*, hearth, cat, and other household items.

Rembrandt closely emulated Crispijn's *Winter* in his 1654 engraving of the Holy Family, *The Virgin and Child with the Cat and the Snake* (Figure 90). Although Rembrandt probably based his figure of Mary directly on Mantegna's *The Virgin and Child* (fig. 108), ca. 1500, it is probable that he also turned once again to Crispijn's *Winter*. The blazing fire at the far right side of Rembrandt's domestic interior echoes that in Crispijn's print. Mary sits directly on the floor in Rembrandt's print in her role as the Madonna of Humility, similar to the mother's position in *Winter*. A chair, like the one in which the old man sits in *Winter*, appears behind Mary. Additionally, to the left of Mary in Rembrandt's print appears a cat and to the right a sewing basket, the same configuration of these elements as in *Winter*.

Although Rembrandt portrayed the Holy Family as contemporaneous Dutch persons with elements that still signify their sacred identity, his student Ferdinand Bol further blurred the distinction between the sacred and the secular. Bol's etching, *The Holy Family in a Room* (fig. 109), ca. 1645, captures an intimate view of Mary as she cradles her suckling infant in a cozy domestic interior filled with the accoutrements of a nursery, including a *bakermat*. Joseph, seated behind Mary, leans forward to cover the child in her lap with a blanket. Based on Rembrandt's 1632 etching on the same

theme, Bol's print used Rembrandt's manner of representing Mary as a secular woman in a domestic interior. However, Bol deleted the halo Rembrandt inscribed around Mary's head in the form of a windowpane, and the snake Rembrandt placed beneath her feet to signify her conquering of evil.<sup>234</sup> Bol's etching fully transforms the Holy Family into an image that the viewer could easily mistake for an ordinary, secular family inside a contemporaneous domestic interior.

Following the publication of the prints by Rembrandt and Bol, Dutch artists had at their disposal numerous models of traditional and secularized Holy Family scenes that they could appropriate for any family-related themes. In Pieter de Hooch's painting, for example, *A Woman with Children in an Interior* (fig. 110), ca. 1658-60, a mother nurses her infant near a fireplace and a window in a space containing some of the same objects Bol included in his domestic interior, such as a tall cabinet, chair, and a drinking vessel. While De Hooch's painting can not be misinterpreted as a scene of the Holy Family, given that the patriarch Joseph is absent from the scene, the work closely resembles pictures of the sacred figures created by Rembrandt and Bol earlier in the century.

During the same period that artists, such as De Hooch, produced imagery of secular families that evoked the Holy Family, others depicted scenes of the Holy

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<sup>234</sup> The Virgin's association with the snake in Roman Catholicism usually signifies that she has successfully conquered evil, thus denoting her as the "new Eve." As Marina Warner states, the snake's symbolism as a source of knowledge and power in ancient texts changed to that of the devil in Revelation 20:2: "And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world." Warner, *Alone of All Her Sex: The Myth and the Cult of the Virgin Mary*, 268-69.

Family that could be mistaken for a secular, “Every” family. In Emanuel de Witte’s *Holy Family by Candlelight* (fig. 111), 1650, and Pieter Cornelisz van Slingelandt’s *The Carpenter’s Family* (fig. 112), ca. 1665, the Holy Family is identifiable as such by Joseph’s woodworking supplies, yet otherwise the figures are disguised as a contemporaneous, secular group.<sup>235</sup> The shared pictorial vocabulary of the works by De Hooch, De Witte, and Van Slingelandt demonstrates that after the mid-seventeenth century, artists depicted *both* the Holy Family and secular family with or without the patriarch as figures with the physical features, clothing, and household objects that visually likened them to average Dutch viewers and their own domestic environments.

After mid century, the familiarity audiences had with the long pictorial tradition of imagery that depicted or at least suggested Mary and the Holy Family as secular Dutch persons contributed to the acceptance of Mary as an acceptable devotional exemplar for Protestant audiences. Only four years after Van Slingelandt painted *The Carpenter’s Family*, the Calvinist predicant Willem Sluiter published his popular tribute to Mary, *Lof der Heilige Maagt Maria*. Sluiter’s readership would have been well acquainted with the secularized treatment of Mary by artists, including Crispijn, Rembrandt, Bol, De Hooch, De Witte, and Van Slingelandt, which, in turn, could have contributed to the resounding success of Sluiter’s book.

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<sup>235</sup> For De Witte’s painting, see Peter C. Sutton et al., *Reclaimed: Paintings from the Collection of Jacques Goudstikker* (Greenwich, CT, New York, New Haven, and London: Bruce Museum and The Jewish Museum in association with Yale University Press, 2008), 184-88, cat. no. 24. For Van Slingelandt’s work, see Wayne Franits, *Dutch Seventeenth-Century Genre Painting: Its Stylistic and Thematic Evolution* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2004), 128.

## The Secularization of Mary in Sluiter's *Lof de Heilige Maagt Maria*

While Sluiter and his fellow Calvinist reformers may have been unlikely candidates for promoting Marian devotion in the Republic, the preacher's guidebook harkens back to Martin Luther's initial support for a Protestantized conception of Mary in the early years of the Reformation. Luther criticized the traditional Catholic pictorial conception of Mary, reproaching artists "who paint and model the Holy Virgin so perfectly that nothing scornful, only vain importance and high things are to be seen in her . . . in order to make us seem dumb and desperate." Instead, Luther directed artists to capture "how in her is united the immeasurable richness of God with her own deep poverty; godly worth with her smallness; the largeness of God with her undeservedness; God's grace with her unworthiness . . . ."<sup>236</sup> Sluiter's perception and appreciation of Mary thus fulfills Luther's objective to praise her as the humble mother of Christ.

The edifying principles of Mary's sacred motherhood that Luther supported are underscored in the title page of Sluiter's posthumous second edition of *Lof der Heilige Maagt Maria, en Triomferende Christus*, 1681, published in Amsterdam by

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<sup>236</sup> "[D]ie uns die selige Jungfrau also abmalen und vorbilden, daß nichts Verachts, sondern eitel große, hohe Ding an ihr anzusehen sind . . . , damit sie uns blöd und verzagt machen." "[W]ie in ihr der überschwengliche Reichtum Gottes mit ihrer tiefen Armut, die göttliche Ehre mit ihrer Nichtigkeit, die göttliche Würdigkeit mit ihrer Verachtung, die göttliche Größe mit ihrer Kleinheit, die göttliche Güte mit ihrem Unverdienst. . . ." Martin Luther, *D. Martin Luthers Werke. Kritische Gesamtausgabe* (Weimar: Hermann Böhlaus Nachfolger, 1883-1993), 7:277. For a discussion of the quote, see Hans Freiherr Campenhausen, "Zwingli und Luther zur Bilderfrage," in *Das Gottesbild im Abendland*, ed. Wolfgang Schöne and Hans Freiherr Campenhausen, *Glaube und Forschung* (Witten and Berlin: Eckart, 1959), 158. For the English translation of the quote, see Tümpel, "Religious History Painting," 53 n. 14.

Johannes Boekholt (fig. 113). Moses stands in the lower right corner of the image holding the tablets of the Ten Commandments and points toward the Holy Family huddled together in a manger with farm animals at the left of the composition. Inscribed above the illustration is the biblical verse from Mary's *Magnificat*, "For behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed" (Luke 1:48).<sup>237</sup> The *Magnificat*, Mary's longest sustained speech in the Gospels, indicates her earthly acknowledgment of the Incarnation, which in turn signifies her own Immaculate Conception.<sup>238</sup> Mary's representation as a peasant woman in the frontispiece of the Calvinist tract thus aligns the book's theological viewpoint with Luther's of the Virgin as an earthly role model.

Sluiter's publisher, Boekholt, emphasized Mary's desirability as a standard for emulation by women in the book's third edition published in 1687. The volume contains a fold-out engraving of the Holy Family in their Flight into Egypt (fig. 114) after a print by Hendrick Goltzius or his studio from ca. 1587-91 (fig. 115). The Flight into Egypt, the earliest theme for the Holy Family's representation in art as a nuclear family, pertains to the event after Christ's birth when Joseph and Mary were forced to flee from Bethlehem to Egypt to protect Christ from Herod's order to kill all

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<sup>237</sup> The inscription reads, "Want siet, van nu aan sullen my saligh spreken alle de geslachten."

<sup>238</sup> The liturgy of the *Magnificat* (Luke 1:46-55) recounts Mary's visit to her cousin Elizabeth during which she rejoices in God's power and gives thanks for her son. Katz, "Regarding Mary: Women's Lives Reflected in the Virgin's Image," 42; Warner, *Alone of All Her Sex: The Myth and the Cult of the Virgin Mary*, 9-13.

newborns.<sup>239</sup> The omission of the halo over Mary's head, presumably under the publisher Boekholt's instruction, found in the Goltzius-studio print stresses her earthly, physical body. Here, Mary sits directly on the ground as the Madonna of Humility, which creates a pyramidal form at the base of a tree in a wooded landscape. She gazes adoringly at the Christ child while Joseph, cast in shadows in the far left middle ground, adjusts the saddle of the family's donkey. Unlike Goltzius's other variations that emphasize the triumvirate of the Holy Family unit (figs. 116-18), the Sluiter-book engraving minimizes Joseph's presence. Mary's elongated and oversized figure placed in the center foreground overshadows Joseph who takes a secondary position behind her. Thus, the focus is on Mary in the context of the Holy Family. Sluiter and his publisher effectively dismissed the typical Protestant reluctance to single her out from the family group or to praise her as the perfect Queen of Heaven and humanity's intermediary.

The images in Sluiter's books, therefore, support his premise that Mary is the single most effective and practical spiritual model for the ideal Protestant mother and wife. His exaltation of Mary in *Lof der Heilige Maagt Maria* disrupts our conventional understanding of her role in the seventeenth-century Dutch Reformed Church. Despite current impressions that Protestants maintained a strong aversion to Marianism and vehemently discouraged the production of Marian devotional art and

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<sup>239</sup> The Flight into Egypt and the family's subsequent emigration to Nazareth is chronicled in Matthew's Gospel. It is also mentioned in the Gospel of Pseudo Matthew 20:1. Katz, "Regarding Mary: Women's Lives Reflected in the Virgin's Image," 60, 161. See also Sheila Schwartz, "The Iconography of the Rest on the Flight into Egypt" (Ph.D. diss., New York University, 1975).

spiritual tracts, Sluiter's tome demonstrates that Dutch Protestants sustained their appreciation of her. Sluiter's Calvinist book, first published in 1669, manifests the fascination with images of the sacred and secular Mary in Dutch art that blossomed in the 1630s and continued to evolve over the course of the century. The widespread popularity of the secularized Holy Family, and of Mary, in particular, enabled the formerly Roman Catholic theme to offer once again an ideal model for emulation amongst both Catholics and Protestants.



### CHAPTER THREE

#### The Chapel of Our Lady of Need in Heiloo and Marian Devotion in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Catholic Print Culture

As the revival of Catholicism intensified during the 1630s in the United Provinces, many Dutch artists and patrons cultivated a similar revival of Catholic devotional art.<sup>240</sup> By mid-century, the art market became saturated with an extraordinary output of images on themes, such as the lives of the saints, which would have appealed to a distinctly Roman Catholic audience. The vast majority of these works took the form of single-sheet prints that artists could easily reproduce and sell at inexpensive prices. Devotional prints often combine text with an image that depicts, for example, a religious figure or a narrative, thus serving as an important visual conduit from the Catholic believer to the pantheon of saints during prayer, pious and moral instruction, and meditation. Viewers could use the images to take

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<sup>240</sup> On the seventeenth-century revival of Catholicism in the Northern Netherlands, see P. H. A. M. Abels and J. G. J. van Booma, "Tussen Rooms-katholiek en Utrechts-gereformeerd. Het eigen karakter van het Utrechtse Reformatieproces," in *Utrechters entre-deux. Stad en Sticht in de eeuw van de Reformatie, 1520-1620*, ed. H. ten Boom (Delft: Eburon, 1992), 193-230; A. Th. van Deursen, *Plain Lives in a Golden Age: Popular Culture, Religion and Society in Seventeenth-Century Holland*; Israel, *The Dutch Republic: Its Rise, Greatness, and Fall, 1477-1806*, 377-98; Hans Knippenberg, *De religieuze kaart van Nederland. Omvang en geografische spreading van de godsdienstige gezindten vanaf de Reformatie tot heden* (Assen and Maastricht: Van Gorcum, 1992), 33; Mullett, *The Catholic Reformation*; Parker, *Faith on the Margins: Catholics and Catholicism in the Dutch Golden Age*; Rogier, *Geschiedenis van het Katholicisme in Noord-Nederland in de 16e en de 17e eeuw*; Mathieu G. Spiertz, "Priest and Layman in a Minority Church: The Roman Catholic Church in the Northern Netherlands 1592-1686," in *The Ministry: Clerical and Lay*, ed. W. J. Shields and Diana Blackwood, *Studies in Church History* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989), 287-301; James D. Tracy, "With and without the Counter-Reformation: The Catholic Church in the Spanish Netherlands and the Dutch Republic, 1580-1650: A Review of the Literature Since 1945," *Church Historical Review* 71 (1985): 547-75.

visual journeys through biblical narratives and to invoke spiritual guidance from the saints for protection against disease and physical harm. Most importantly, devotional images elicited from the believer an immediate, emotional, and deeply intimate sense of piety.<sup>241</sup> For pilgrims, artists produced palm-sized, rectangular prayer cards of scenes of sacred shrines and the cult images housed inside to serve as souvenirs of their religious journeys.<sup>242</sup> Perhaps in order to satisfy quickly the steady demand for devotional prints, artists executed many works with crudely drawn, stiff, and bulky figures that they sometimes hastily colored by hand, usually with no indication of the artist's signature or the date of execution. The sheer volume of images exploring traditional Christian subjects indicates a renewed demand for Catholic art in the Dutch Republic.

A survey of the seventeenth-century collection at the Museum

Catharijneconvent in Utrecht, a substantial repository of Netherlandish Catholic art,

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<sup>241</sup> For recent studies of devotional prints as material culture in the early modern period, see Willem Frijhoff, "Devotieprentjes als bestanddeel van culturele praktijken," *Volkskundig Bulletin* 16, no. 3 (1990); Evelyne M. F. Verheggen, *Beelden voor Passie en Hartstocht: Bid- en devotieprenten in de Noordelijke Nederlanden, 17de en 18de eeuw* (Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 2006); Joannes A. J. M. Verspaandonk, *Het hemels prentenboek. Devotie- en bidprentjes vanaf de 17e eeuw tot het begin van de 20e eeuw* (Hilversum: Gooi en Sticht, 1975).

<sup>242</sup> Freedberg argues that a pilgrim's acquisition, at a sacred shrine, of a devotional print that resembles the shrine's cult image is an integral aspect of the pilgrimage experience. He adds that the similarity of the print to the cult image enhances the work's potential as a carrier of spiritual meaning. David Freedberg, *The Power of Images: Studies in the History and Theory of Response*, 100, 112, 120. On pilgrimage practice in the Dutch Republic, see Marc Wingens, "Miraculous Cures in Promoting Salvation and Interest for Catholics in the Dutch Republic (1640-1740)," in *Curing and Insuring: Essays on Illness in Past Times: The Netherlands, Belgium, England, and Italy, 16th-20th Centuries. Proceedings of the Conference 'Illness and History,' Rotterdam, 16 November 1990*, ed. J. M. W. Binnevelde and Rudolf M. Dekker (Hilversum: Verloren, 1993), 57-68.

reveals that Mary and the stages of her life continued to function as a principal theme in the corpus of devotional art. The Utrecht collection contains hundreds of paintings, engravings, and etchings representing Mary in an extraordinary assortment of narratives. The very existence of such a substantial body of Marian images from the seventeenth-century United Provinces demonstrates Mary's successful longevity in the religious and cultural life of Dutch Catholics after the Reformation.

One of the Museum Catharijneconvent's most exemplary works of Catholic imagery from the Golden Age depicts Mary, crowned as the Queen of Heaven, in a large-scale etching with engraving descriptively entitled, *Ruins of the Chapel of Our Lady of Need* (fig. 119).<sup>243</sup> A poem in Dutch inscribed in the bottom margin of the

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<sup>243</sup> The print measures 26 x 33 cm. Two other impressions of the print are in the collections of the Regionaal Archief in Alkmaar and the Historische Vereniging Oud Heiloo in Heiloo. For the history of the chapel of Our Lady of Need, and brief discussions of the print, see Joan Bertrand, *De Runxputte en Onze Lieve Vrouw ter Nood. Een bekend bedevaartsoord te Heiloo* (Schoorl: Pirola, 1980); Defoer et al., *Godelijk geschilderd. Honderd meesterwerken van Museum Catharijneconvent*, 169; Frijhoff and Spies, *1650: Hard-Won Unity*, 28, 372; Frijhoff, "The Function of the Miracle in a Catholic Minority," 126; Eddy de Jongh, *Portretten van echt en trouw. Huwelijk en gezin in de Nederlandse kunst van de zeventiende eeuw* (Zwolle and Haarlem: Waanders and Frans Halsmuseum, 1986), 212-14; J. A. F. Kronenburg, *Maria's Heerlijkheid in Nederland. Geschiedkundige schetsen van de Vereering der H. Maagd in ons Vaderland, van de broegste tijden tot op onze dagen*, vol. 6 (Amsterdam: F. H. J. Bekker, 1904-31); Peter Jan Margry, "Heiloo's heilige plaatsen: oude devoties, revitalisatie en cultusfiliaties," in *Heiloo voor en na Willibrord. Opstellen over de geschiedenis van Heiloo*, ed. C. Streefkerk (Heiloo: Gemeente Heiloo, 1995), 89-101; Peter Jan Margry, "Heiloo, O. L. Vrouw ter Nood," Meertens Instituut, <http://www.meertens.knaw.nl/bedevaart/bol/plaats/308> (accessed July 23, 2009); Frederik Muller, *De Nederlandsche geschiedenis in platen. Beredeneerde beschrijving van Nederlandsche historieplaten, zinneprenten en historische kaarten* (Amsterdam: Frederik Muller, 1870), 1:241, no. 1760; Casper H. Staal and Marc Wingens, *Bedevaarten in Nederland* (Zutphen: Walberg Pers, 1997), 103-10; P. Stroomer, "Onze Lieve Vrouw ter Nood onder Heiloo," *De katholieke illustratie: zondags-lektuur voor het katholieke Nederlandsche volk* 41 (1907): 42, 45; Ottie

unsigned and undated print identifies the bulky ruins as the last vestiges of the fifteenth-century Catholic church, *Onze Lieve Vrouwe ter Nood* (Our Lady of Need), located in the coastal region of north Holland in Heiloo.<sup>244</sup> The poem's title reads: "Picture of the Chapel of Our Lady of Runxputte Otherwise Called of Need at Heiloo in Oesdum."<sup>245</sup> The title fuses together the name of the Marian chapel, Our Lady of Need, and its sacred well, commonly dubbed the *Runxputte*, and includes the shrine's former rural address in the hamlet of Oesdom, which has been integrated into the village of Heiloo.<sup>246</sup> The Dutch language of the image's inscription and its colloquial reference to the name of the chapel's well that locates the shrine to a site within the borders of the Republic, reasonably implies that Dutch Catholics would comprise the majority of the print's target audience. Catholics would have been more familiar than

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Thiers, *'T Putje van Heiloo. Bedevaarten naar O. L. Vrouw ter Nood* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2005), 26; Verheggen, *Beelden voor Passie en Hartstocht: Bid- en devotieprenten in de Noordelijke Nederlanden, 17de en 18de eeuw*, 241-42, 244.

<sup>244</sup> Today the site of the former chapel is situated in the province of North Holland, which is a subdivision of Holland that was created in 1840. A large church has been built on the grounds, which continues to function as a major destination for Dutch Catholic pilgrims. The chapel's historical records do not indicate the year in which the original structure was built on the site or exactly how it appeared before its destruction. A document dating from the year 1409, which mentions the chapel, serves as evidence that it must have existed at least by that date. Ottie Thiers, *'T Putje van Heiloo. Bedevaarten naar O. L. Vrouw ter Nood*, 17.

<sup>245</sup> "Afbeeldinge vande Capelle van ons Lie-vravw te runcx-putten anders genaemt ter noot tot heylo in Oesdvm." I am grateful to Roger Noel and Rebecca van Beem for their assistance with the translations of the seventeenth-century Dutch inscriptions in this print. For the sake of clarity, I will refer to the site of the chapel as Heiloo in the following pages of this chapter. The small hamlet of Oesdom, which had been located between Heiloo and Limmen, was incorporated into Heiloo in the late Middle Ages where it remains today. Ibid.

<sup>246</sup> Although scholars do not know the meaning or origin of the word "Runxputte," the name appears in the literature in various spellings as a reference to both the well and its chapel. Ibid.

Protestants with pilgrimage sites located in the remote villages of north Holland, and focus on Mary would have appealed to them. A close analysis of the print as a case study with particular attention paid to its portrayal of Mary, therefore, can cast significant light on her role in seventeenth-century Dutch Catholic devotional art.

The composition of *Ruins of the Chapel* centers on Mary's glowing body nestled within a deep crevice of an eroded, misshapen stone wall formed to outline the contours of her long, narrow body. Mary stands fully frontal and upright in the wall's gap wearing a pointed crown while she embraces the Christ child and a long scepter. An elegant U-shaped dark line incised beneath her feet at the base of the crevice forms a slender crescent moon, which iconographically signifies the Immaculate Conception.<sup>247</sup> Her clearly delineated figure, perhaps denoting her apparition or her imagined presence, dominates the middle of the chapel's ruins. Projecting above the horizon of a dark, wooded landscape, the wall faces parallel to the picture plane framing Mary's frontal pose. Along both sides of the chapel's wall large leafy trees create coulisses that highlight Mary's figure. A crowd of devout pilgrims scattered in the landscape further draws the viewer's attention to her. In a

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<sup>247</sup> The Roman Catholic dogma of the Immaculate Conception was not declared a doctrine until 1854 under Pope Pius IX. On the Immaculate Conception, its iconography, and Protestant and Catholic interpretations of it in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, see Graef, *Mary: A History of Doctrine and Devotion*, 7, 11, 15, 18, 24; Warner, *Alone of All Her Sex: The Myth and the Cult of the Virgin Mary*, 236-54.

quiet procession along a circular pathway created around the wall, the pilgrims walk, kneel, and prostrate themselves in supplication to Mary.<sup>248</sup>

The pilgrims' concentration on Mary in *Ruins of the Chapel* defines her as the patron saint of the chapel, and by extension, identifies the pilgrims as ardent Catholics. The overarching Marian theme is largely absent from the work's one extant pictorial precedent, an oil on panel signed and dated 1630 by the Alkmaar artist, Gerrit Pietersz de Jongh (fig. 120).<sup>249</sup> De Jongh's painting portrays a family situated in front of the identical ruins pictured in the etching under discussion, with

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<sup>248</sup> On the pilgrims' poses and gestures of prayer in the print, see Willem Frijhoff, "The Kiss Sacred and Profane: Reflections on a Cross-Cultural Confrontation," in *The Cultural History of Gesture*, ed. Jan Bremmer and Herman Roodenburg (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), 228-29; J. A. F. Kronenburg, *Maria's Heerlijkheid in Nederland. Geschiedkundige schetsen van de Vereering der H. Maagd in ons Vaderland, van de broegste tijden tot op onze dagen* (Amsterdam: F. H. J. Bekker, 1904-31), 6:23. See also Frijhoff, "The Function of the Miracle in a Catholic Minority," 115.

<sup>249</sup> De Jongh's painting measures 78 x 70 cm. The artist signed the work on a stone he depicted in the center foreground: "G. de Jongh, 1630." In the lower left corner below the seated patriarch of the family, the artist painted the text: "uterque aetatis 30" (both aged 30). Scholars have argued that the inscription might refer to the age of the husband and wife. Alternatively, the Latin quotation could signify a relationship between the husband and Jesus whose presumed death at 33—nearly the age of 30—could inspire the husband to model himself after the biblical figure. For a brief discussion of De Jongh's painting and its similarity to the print under discussion, *Ruins of the Chapel*, see Eelco Beukers, Thimo de Nijs, and Jan Blokker, *Het bijzondere van Holland. Een geschiedenis van Holland in 25 verhalen* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2005), 56-57; Defoer et al., *Godelijk geschilderd. Honderd meesterwerken van Museum Catharijneconvent*, 168-70, cat. no. 52; J. Dijkstra, P. P. W. M. Dirkse, and A. E. A. M. Smits, *De schilderijen van Museum Catharijneconvent* (Utrecht and Zwolle: Museum Catharijneconvent and Waanders, 2002), 211; De Jongh, *Portretten van echt en trouw. Huwelijk en gezin in de Nederlandse kunst van de zeventiende eeuw*, 212-24; Susan Donahue Kuretsky, *Time and Transformation in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Art* (Poughkeepsie, New York, and Seattle: The Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center, Vassar College, and University of Washington Press, 2005), 33-34; Staal and Wingens, *Bedevoarten in Nederland*, 103-6; Thiers, *'T Putje van Heiloo. Bedevaarten naar O. L. Vrouw ter Nood*, 16.

numerous pilgrims facing the cavity in the chapel's wall and standing along the path encircling the shrine. The inscription at the bottom right-hand corner reads: "the chapel of Our Lady of Runxputte in Oesdom," which confirms that the painting and the etching depict the same pilgrimage shrine in the Dutch village near Oesdom.<sup>250</sup> The two works differ, however, in their representation of Mary. In contrast to De Jongh's defined figure of Mary in the wall of the chapel faintly, the print, *Ruins of the Chapel*, becomes infused with a different meaning because of her more pronounced and deliberate delineation. The painting's scene of a family embarking upon a pilgrimage could presumably be appreciated privately on a wall of their own home, whereas the print offers a passionate statement of Marian devotion available for the potential reception of the entire population of Dutch Catholics.<sup>251</sup>

The cartouche resembling a sheet of curled paper in the upper center of *Ruins of the Chapel* underscores the likelihood of the print's Dutch Catholic patronage. A vertical line divides the cartouche in half, separating text and image on either side. As I will discuss in greater detail later in this chapter, the left half of the cartouche depicts a view of the chapel's exterior as it may have appeared before the building's partial demolition during the Spanish siege of Alkmaar in 1573; the right half illustrates the plan of the chapel, which was razed to the ground in 1637, probably by Calvinist governmental authorities to deter pilgrimages to the shrine or prevent the

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<sup>250</sup> "De Capell van onze Lvrouw de Runx putten tot Oesdom."

<sup>251</sup> Staal and Wingens mention in their survey of pilgrimage destinations in the Netherlands that Mary appeared as an apparition in Oesdom's chapel ruins around the year 1600, yet they do not cite their source for this claim. Casper H. Staal and Marc Wingens, *Bedevoarten in Nederland* (Zutphen: Walberg Pers, 1997), 22.

structure's use by the Spanish.<sup>252</sup> The artist of the print further chronicles the turbulent life span of the church of Our Lady of Need with an inscription on the wall below the crevice that cradles Mary's figure, which reads: "the old chapel in ruins stood from the year 1573 to 1637."<sup>253</sup> Dutch Catholics, more so than Protestants, would have felt a vested interest in pictorial records of their places of worship in the United Provinces that remained in use by Catholics exclusively after the Reformation.

The printmaker's purposeful reliance upon the motif of recognizable structure in *Ruins of the Chapel* defines the subtext of the image as about both Dutch place *and* Roman Catholicism.<sup>254</sup> Although Dutch artists frequently drew inspiration from the plethora of ruins still visible throughout the Republic in the seventeenth century, *Ruins of the Chapel* diverges from the standard representation of ruins. It portrays elements that did not ever physically exist at the site: the glowing figure of Mary and the Christ child. In stark contrast to the print, a contemporaneous wash drawing of Heiloo's shrine produced by an anonymous artist, *Ruins of the Chapel of Our Lady of Need* (fig. 121), portrays the convincing likeness of the chapel's ruins with human

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<sup>252</sup> Ibid., 23. Thiers contends that the Reformed Church's struggle to gain power in Catholic-dominated territories, such as in North Holland, prompted the Church to take measures controlling Catholics and their public displays of faith, including pilgrimages. Thiers, *'t Putje van Heiloo. Bedevaarten naar O. L. Vrouw ter Nood*, 20.

<sup>253</sup> "'t Capell aldus in Ruwy gestaen van Ao 1573 tot 1637."

<sup>254</sup> On the theme of ruins in seventeenth-century Dutch art, see Susan Donahue Kuretsky, *Time and Transformation in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Art* (Poughkeepsie, New York, and Seattle: The Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center, Vassar College, and University of Washington Press, 2005).



figures in the scene.<sup>255</sup> The wash drawing's artist perpetuated the common mode in Dutch art of depicting the true-to-life appearance of architectural ruins for their aesthetic or poignant qualities by eliminating Catholic saints from the image. While the presence of Mary in the image could have held a powerful meaning for Catholics, her absence increases the work's marketability to a broader audience of multi-confessional buyers. The inclusion of the Virgin's ephemeral and visionary figure in the center of *Ruins of the Chapel*—an image that otherwise depicts a scene of everyday religious life—focuses upon Mary, not the ruins, as the main subject of the print. Several additional works that replicate the scene in paint and print suggest the popularity it must have had for seventeenth-century audiences.

The first image, a watercolor signed with the name S. van Baseroy (fig. 122), meticulously follows the design of the ruins and pilgrims in the etching as well as the cartouche and its didactic poem.<sup>256</sup> With the exception of the watercolor's calligraphic style of text used for the margin's poem, its composition closely resembles the etching. The painting could have served as a model for a printmaker to reproduce the composition.

The second and third works appear to be etchings pulled from the same plate as the impression of *Ruins of the Chapel* in Utrecht's Museum Catharijneconvent.<sup>257</sup>

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<sup>255</sup> See Bertrand for a reproduction and description of the drawing. Joan Bertrand, *De Runxputte en Onze Lieve Vrouw ter Nood. Een bekend bedevaartsoord te Heiloo*, 15.

<sup>256</sup> Staal and Wingens, *Bedevaarten in Nederland*.

<sup>257</sup> For a brief mention of the Alkmaar print, see C. W. Bruinvis, "Bedevaarten naar den put te Heiloo," *De Navorscher. Een middel tot gedachtenwisseling en letterkundig verkeer tusschen allen, die iets weten, iets te vragen hebben, of iets*

The two etchings are located in the collections of the Regionaal Archief in Alkmaar (fig. 123), and the Historische Vereniging Oud Heiloo in Heiloo (fig. 124). The prints each bear a signature in the lower left corner of the sheet, which is barely legible in the Utrecht impression, that reads “Gedruckt t’Amsterdam by Frederick De Witt” (printed in Amsterdam by Frederick De Witt). The name probably refers to Frederick de Wit, the renowned mapmaker and print publisher who based his studio in Amsterdam around 1650.<sup>258</sup>

A close comparison of Utrecht’s impression of *Ruins of the Chapel* with those in Heiloo and Alkmaar, however, reveals that De Wit most likely acquired the plate used for earlier, non-extant impressions of the etching and reissued it under his own name.<sup>259</sup> De Wit frequently purchased plates from other publishing houses, especially from the leading Dutch printers, Blaeu and Jansson, and reprinted them to augment his studio’s output. In the process of republishing a print De Wit often added his signature to the acquired plate and slightly modified its composition. He also

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*kunnen oplossen* 12 (1862); P. Stroomer, “Onze Lieve Vrouw ter Nood onder Heiloo,” 43.

<sup>258</sup> For De Wit’s (1629/30-1706) Amsterdam studio, “De Witte Pascaert,” see Jan Werner, *In de Witte Pascaert. Kaarten en atlassen van Frederick de Wit, uitgever te Amsterdam, ca. 1630-1706*, vol. 5, Kartografie in de Universiteitsbibliotheek van Amsterdam (Amsterdam and Alphen aan den Rijn: Universiteitsbibliotheek and Canaletto, 1994).

<sup>259</sup> On De Wit’s ownership of the plate, see Bertrand, *De Runxputte en Onze Lieve Vrouw ter Nood. Een bekend bedevaartsoord te Heiloo*, 16; Frijhoff, “The Function of the Miracle in a Catholic Minority,” 126; Staal and Wingens, *Bedevoarten in Nederland*, 105, cat. no. H 5; Thiers, *T Putje van Heiloo. Bedevoarten naar O. L. Vrouw ter Nood*, 26; Verheggen, *Beelden voor Passie en Hartstocht: Bid- en devotieprenten in de Noordelijke Nederlanden, 17de en 18de eeuw*, 241.

removed pictorial elements to improve the work's marketability.<sup>260</sup> We see such modifications in the Utrecht, Heiloo, and Alkmaar impressions.

Numerous differences in the three prints offer compelling evidence that other impressions of *Ruins of the Chapel* must have been produced prior to De Wit's acquisition of the plate. If so, De Wit must have acquired the plate with knowledge of the scene's popularity, and thought to gain profit from its republication. First, De Wit's signature appears differently in each of the three prints (figs. 125-27). A printmaker incised the letters lightly in engraving for the prints in Utrecht and Heiloo; the text in the former print is barely legible due to the scant amount of ink held in grooves of the plate. In contrast, Alkmaar's print is etched heavily with letters of the signature that are bolder and darker than any other on the sheet, which suggests that the signature was added after the other elements in the composition. Moreover, the contours of the figures, trees, and architecture in the Alkmaar print have also been reworked with darkly etched lines that are comparatively much thicker than those in the Utrecht and Heiloo prints. Given that the lines in the inscription and image of the two prints exhibit signs of wear while at the same time De Wit's signature appears only faintly in contrast to the etched letters of their inscriptions, I argue that the plate had been printed many times before the three extant sheets were produced. The Utrecht and Heiloo prints likely served as tests with which the printer could judge the

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<sup>260</sup> See, for example, the detailed discussion of Jacob Sandrart's map of the German cities, Ansbach and Coburg, which De Wit altered and republished, in Richard Pennington, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Etched Work of Wenceslaus Hollar, 1607-1677* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 132, cat. no. 821.

placement of the signature before the same letters in the Alkmaar impression were enhanced with thickly etched lines.

Compositional differences in the three prints indicate that the Alkmaar sheet must have been created after the two in Utrecht and Heiloo, and since all three bear De Wit's signature, the plate must have been used for earlier impressions before he acquired it. For example, the Alkmaar print lacks the crescent moon and Mary's scepter, found in the Utrecht and Heiloo sheets. In addition, the rays of light around the head of the Christ child and Mary's crown are not identical to those in the Utrecht and Heiloo prints. The printmaker of Alkmaar's sheet also burnished hatch marks in the lower left corner to create a long, narrow stroke-free space in which letters of an illegible signature appear. Given that the continuity of line for a dense passage of hatch marks could not be maintained as they appear in the Utrecht and Heiloo prints if their printmaker attempted to cover the burnished area created for the Alkmaar sheet, the latter sheet must have been produced after the former two.

Regardless of the sequence of the Utrecht, Heiloo, and Alkmaar prints, their portrayal of a nearly identical scene in an easily reproducible medium testifies to the image's desirability in the Dutch art market and its likely impact on Marian devotion after 1637 in the Republic. An engraving by the Antwerp print publisher Isabella Hertsens from ca. 1750 entitled *Ruins of the Chapel of Our Lady of Need* (fig. 128) demonstrates the sustained popularity of Mary's portrayal in this composition as well as in other devotional imagery, and the scene's widespread appeal beyond the Dutch

Republic's borders.<sup>261</sup> Hertsens's print crops the complex landscape and the pilgrims circumnavigating the ruins to focus upon Mary's figure holding the Christ child. The artist includes enough of the misshapen wall around Mary to ensure the structure's recognizability. Although Hertsens adds an inscription to aid the viewer in identifying the ruins, Mary's dominance in the familiar wall indicates that by the eighteenth century she had come to symbolize the chapel itself.

### **The Seventeenth-Century Date of *Ruins of the Chapel***

The relevance of *Ruins of the Chapel* to seventeenth-century developments in Catholicism and Marian devotion in the Republic of course hinges on our ability to reasonably ascribe the undated print to that period.<sup>262</sup> Given the inscription on the

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<sup>261</sup> On Hertsens and the circle of printers who were active in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Antwerp, see Alfons K. L. Thijs, *Antwerpen internationaal uitgeverscentrum van devotieprenten, 17de-18de eeuw* (Leuven: Peeters, 1993), 22-68, esp. 60 and 66.

<sup>262</sup> Scholars have put forth several possible dates for the print that range from 1637 to 1700, but none offer convincing substantiation for their claims. Verheggen dates the print to ca. 1660. Verheggen, *Beelden voor Passie en Hartstocht: Bid- en devotieprenten in de Noordelijke Nederlanden, 17de en 18de eeuw*, 241. Frijhoff and Spies date the print to the 1670s in their co-authored volume. Frijhoff, "The Function of the Miracle in a Catholic Minority," 127. However, in Frijhoff's compilation of his single-authored essays, he dates the print to ca. 1690. Frijhoff and Spies, *1650: Hard-Won Unity*, 372. Bertrand and Thiers also date the print to ca. 1690. Bertrand, *De Runxputte en Onze Lieve Vrouw ter Nood. Een bekend bedevaartsoord te Heiloo*, 16; Thiers, *'T Putje van Heiloo. Bedevaarten naar O. L. Vrouw ter Nood*, 26. De Jongh dates the print to precisely 1696. Eddy de Jongh, *Portretten van echt en trouw. Huwelijk en gezin in de Nederlandse kunst van de zeventiende eeuw*, 212. Similarly, the Regionaal Archief of Alkmaar dates their impression of the print to ca. 1680-1700. For the print, see Regionaal Archief Alkmaar, identification number PR 1001278. Based on a visual comparison of the image with other works on the same theme, I support the general span of dates from 1637 to 1700 for the print that Staal and Wingens originally put forth, which has been corroborated by the Museum

chapel wall that mentions the year 1637 as the date of the chapel's razing, the artist could not have produced the image before that year. Also, the artist probably etched the plate before the year 1700 when a much simpler image, *Saint Willibrord and the Ruins of the Chapel of Our Lady of Need* (fig. 129), appeared in Jacob van Royen's first edition of *Antiquitates Belgicae of Nederlandsche Oudtheden*.<sup>263</sup> Van Royen's volume, published in Amsterdam, provides an account and visual record of architectural landmarks in the Netherlands—both religious and secular. The book's illustration of the ruins of the chapel of Our Lady of Need, etched by Jan Goeree, clearly relied upon the earlier etching under discussion, *Ruins of the Chapel*. The long span of sixty-three years since the time of the chapel's demolition in 1637 and the

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Catharijneconvent. As I will explain in the following pages of this chapter, the year 1637—the earliest possible date of the image's production—is inscribed in the print's composition. The year 1637 refers to the date of the chapel's razing to the ground. I propose that the latest possible date of production for the print, 1700, corresponds to the publication year of a book by Jacob van Royen, which is illustrated with an image designed after the print under discussion. Defoer et al., *Goddelijk geschilderd. Honderd meesterwerken van Museum Catharijneconvent*, 169; Staal and Wingens, *Bedevoarten in Nederland*, 105, cat. no. H 5.

<sup>263</sup> Jacob van Royen, *Antiquitates Belgicae of Nederlandsche Oudtheden* (Amsterdam: Jacob van Royen, 1700). Van Royen's book is one of eight editions adapted from Richard Verstegen's (1550-1640) *Nederlantsche antiquiteyten*, which was first published in 1613 in Antwerp. Van Royen's preface mentions the text's original Flemish author, Richard Verstegen, and the book's illustrator, Jan Goeree. Although most of the book's illustrations do not depict religious sites, its etching of Saint Willibrord with pilgrims at Oesdom's chapel is certainly not in conflict with Verstegen's Catholic religious convictions. Georgius Everhardus Rumphius, Georg Eberhard Rumpf, and E. M. Beekman, *The Ambonese Curiosity Cabinet*, trans. E. M. Beekman (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), 457 n. 20. On Verstegen's promotion of Counter Reformation, anti-Protestant doctrines in his written work, and his contribution to the revival of Catholicism in northern Europe, see Paul Arblaster, *Antwerp and the World: Richard Verstegan and the International Culture of Catholic Reformation* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2004).

Van Royen's book's first edition in 1700 also makes it highly unlikely that Goeree could have observed the chapel's ruins.

Jan Goeree's illustration shares much in common with the composition of *Ruins of the Chapel*. Labeled in the bottom margin of the page, "*De Kapel der LVrouw ter Nood tot Heiloo*" (The Chapel of Our Lady of Need at Heiloo), Goeree's print portrays Heiloo's shrine with a glowing figure of Mary situated in the middle of the ruins, as in the etching under discussion.<sup>264</sup> Goeree's model must have been *Ruins of the Chapel* as opposed to De Jongh's earlier painted version given certain pictorial elements described in greater detail in the etching, and not present in the painting. For example, the illustration in *Antiquitates Belgicae* depicts a similar cartouche in the upper portion of the composition of the same view of the chapel's exterior and foundation as in the print under discussion. Goeree's rendering of the scene also portrays a large horse with its rear facing the viewer in the lower-right corner of the image as it appeared in the etching. In addition, both Goeree's print and *Ruins of the Chapel* depict a comparable group of pilgrims walking along the pathway at the right side of the image that pass a begging woman seated on a bank beneath a tree. Finally, the discussion of the chapel's ruins in Van Royen's text that Goeree's etching illustrates mentions the last two lines from Schellius's long poem from the etching.<sup>265</sup>

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<sup>264</sup> Goeree's illustration of Oesdom's shrine is printed on the lower half of the page labeled "bl. 189" below an etching of the ruins of the castle in Purmerend. The text that precedes and follows the illustrated page describes the ruins of the chapel in Oesdom. Van Royen, *Antiquitates Belgicae of Nederlandsche Oudtheden*, 189.

<sup>265</sup> "Maar de yver van het volk groeit zevenmaazl zo groot, / Daar men gevoelt de hulp der Lieven vrouw ter Nood." The poem appears in paragraph 33 on the page numbered 189, which is folio 190. Ibid., 190.

Given that Goeree's print quotes only part of the image and inscription of the etching under discussion and not its entirety, we can reasonably deduce that the artist of *Ruins of the Chapel* produced the print *after* the date of the site's clearing in 1637, but *before* the publication of Van Royen's volume in 1700.

Furthermore, we may plausibly date *Ruins of the Chapel* more precisely to the 1640s. The etching appears nearly identical to an unsigned and undated oil painting of same subject, *Ruins of the Chapel of Our Lady of Need* (fig. 130). Marijke de Kinkelder, curator of seventeenth-century Dutch and Flemish landscape and architectural paintings at the Rijksbureau voor Kunsthistorische Documentatie (RKD) in The Hague, dates the oil painting to ca. 1640-50 based on her expertise of Dutch clothing and artistic styles from the period.<sup>266</sup> Although subtle differences exist between the etching and the anonymous oil painting, the two works almost perfectly replicate the same scene without any alteration to the pilgrims' clothing styles, which suggests the artists produced the two works at about the same time.

In contrast, eighteenth-century prints of the shrine, clearly based on *Ruins of the Chapel* and its related works, update the clothing worn by figures in their images.

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<sup>266</sup> I am grateful to Marijke de Kinkelder for her personal correspondence with me about the painting. Marijke de Kinkelder, "Ruïne van de kapel Onze-Lieve-Vrouw ter Nood in Heiloo met bedevaartgangers," Rijksbureau voor Kunsthistorische Documentatie, [http://www.rkd.nl/rkddb/\(sppfk045alwyk1450jed5cqf\)/detail.aspx](http://www.rkd.nl/rkddb/(sppfk045alwyk1450jed5cqf)/detail.aspx) (accessed July 23, 2009). The painting measures 32.5 x 40 cm. The authors of the museum's catalogue of paintings describe the work as a copy after the etching under discussion, which the museum attributes to the printmaker and publisher Frederick de Wit. The museum dates the work to the last quarter of the seventeenth century, however in view of the costumes depicted in the painting, De Kinkelder's suggested range of dates seems more plausible. J. Dijkstra, P. P. W. M. Dirkse, and A. E. A. M. Smits, *De schilderijen van Museum Catharijneconvent* (Utrecht and Zwolle: Museum Catharijneconvent and Waanders, 2002), 334.



For example, two prints of the scene executed after 1713 (figs. 131-32), the year of a devastating disease that afflicted livestock in the vicinity around Heiloo's chapel, reproduce the chapel ruins and the figure of Mary within the wall, but modernize the clothing worn by the people pictured in the landscape.<sup>267</sup> The male figures wear shoes rather than boots, and women wear wide-brimmed hats, and in some cases, longer aprons than do those in *Ruins of the Chapel*. Given that the figures in the etching and the unsigned oil painting wear the same style of clothing fashionable in the 1640s, the artist of the print probably produced the work during that decade or soon thereafter.

Visual evidence not only supports the categorization of *Ruins of the Chapel* neatly within the Dutch visual culture of the seventeenth century, but also testifies to the powerful meaning of the shrine as a place of Catholic pilgrimage as opposed to a site only popular for tourism. The repeated duplication of Mary in the wall's crevice, and the previously discussed prints and paintings similar to it, also suggest the extent to which Catholic worshippers in the seventeenth and early eighteenth century infused the shrine with profound Marian iconographic meaning. The easily reproducible print medium of the work and its focus on the veneration of the immaculate Queen of Heaven would have helped the image play a key role in promoting pilgrimages to the site and inspiring anti-Protestant sentiments within its Catholic viewers.

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<sup>267</sup> The winter epidemic of 1713-14 that threatened the livelihood of Oesdom's local farmers prompted Catholics and Protestants alike to take advantage of the clean water supply obtainable from the chapel's well. Willem Frijhoff, *Embodied Belief. Ten Essays on Religious Culture in Dutch History*, 62, 126; Staal and Wingens, *Bedevaarten in Nederland*, 22-24; Thiers, *'T Putje van Heiloo. Bedevaarten naar O. L. Vrouw ter Nood*, 28.

## The Political Significance of *Ruins of the Chapel*

The inscription and didactic cartouche in *Ruins of the Chapel* call attention to the turbulent lifespan of Heiloo's chapel and underscore Mary's powerful consolatory role for Dutch pilgrims living in the Calvinist-dominated Republic. The poem inscribed in the bottom margin of *Ruins of the Chapel*, signed with the name Schellius in the lower-right corner of the sheet, addresses the importance of Marian veneration for Dutch Catholics at the shrine that became invigorated after demolition of the shrine in 1637. The poem follows beneath the title in three columns of text in two lines per column:

Here you still see the walls of Our Lady in Oesdom,  
By the Runxputte, where the ground is covered with debris.  
To bury the miracles and singular gifts  
Of the Queen of Heaven, Mother of God:  
But the ardor of the people grows sevenfold,  
Because they experience help from Our Lady of Need.<sup>268</sup>

Schellius instructs the print's viewer to associate the devotees' passionate veneration of Mary after 1637 at the Heiloo shrine with the total destruction of the chapel's foundation. The poem implies that non-Catholics destroyed the chapel as a means to "bury" or immobilize the pilgrims' public devotion to Mary at the shrine. The ruins of the chapel extend on the ground to its well, the *Runxputte*; both, therefore, become infused with Mary's miraculous powers. The poem suggests that pilgrims ought to

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<sup>268</sup> "Hier siet ghy t' muer-werck noch ons Lie-vrouw t' Oesduyn, / By Runcx put daer de gront wert overstulpt met puyn. / Om de miraculen en singuliere gaven / Van 's Hemels Kooningin, Godts moder, te begraven: / Maer d' yver van het volck groeyt sevenmael soo groot, / Daer men gevoelt de hulp van dees Lie-vrouw ter noodt."

continue to visit the shrine in order to come into contact with Mary despite the absence of the chapel.

The cartouche in the upper center of *Ruins of the Chapel* accentuates the overwhelming sense of pathos in the print's iconography. As previously mentioned, at the left side of the cartouche, a topographical rendering of the chapel illustrates its rectangular plan, engaged buttresses visible along the exterior walls, its spout-neck gable at its two ends, and the well that stood near its front portal. The text "Runcx" and "Put" appear at the left and the right of the well's cylindrical shape, respectively, denoting the well's name, Runxputte. Three lines of text inscribed above the chapel describe its original appearance: "the chapel of Runxputte in its entirety that was destroyed in the year 1573."<sup>269</sup>

In the right half of the cartouche, an architectural diagram of the church plan outlines its thick walls, the four engaged buttresses along each of the two long sides, the rectangular altar inside the church at one end, and the circular well outside the church at its opposite end. The print's artist demarcated the oval-shaped walkway created by the pilgrims around the perimeter of the chapel; pairs of short strokes inscribed parallel to one another imply a well-worn pilgrimage path in the ground around the foundation. Above the diagram, three lines of text refer to the chapel's state in ruins as it remained until 1637 when the rubble was cleared from the site: "The foundation of the Chapel, as it looked before the chapel was destroyed in

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<sup>269</sup> "t Capell van Runcx putte in xyn geheel voor dat het vernielt wert Ao 1573."

1637.”<sup>270</sup> In light of the fact that the chapel’s ruins no longer existed after 1637—the earliest possible date for the print—the engraver probably based the chapel’s single erect wall and the outline of the structure’s foundation on De Jongh’s 1630 painting or on Van Baseroy’s watercolor.

The inscription and cartouche in *Ruins of the Chapel* capture and reflect not only the turbulent history of the church of Our Lady of Need, but also mark the time period of Catholicism’s decline in the sixteenth century and its subsequent revival in the seventeenth century. The print’s emotional poem in praise of Mary and its didactic cartouche celebrate the prolonged use of the chapel as a sacred Catholic shrine despite its tumultuous history. In turn, the shrine and its depiction in *Ruins of the Chapel* came to symbolize the reinstatement of Catholicism in the seventeenth-century Republic.

### ***Ruins of the Chapel* and the Revival of Catholicism in the Dutch Republic**

The symbiotic relationship between the print, *Ruins of the Chapel*, and Catholicism’s rise in the United Provinces becomes illuminated in an examination of the print within the context of Jan Goeree’s overtly Catholic manipulation of the theme, *Saint Willibrord and the Ruins of the Chapel of Our Lady of Need* (fig. 129). In the lower-left foreground of the image of Heiloo’s chapel, Goeree prominently portrays Willibrord (ca. 658-739), one of the most well-known missionaries in the

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<sup>270</sup> “De fondamente van t Capell gelyck haer die int uytroyen verthoonden Ao 1637.”

early history of the Netherlands.<sup>271</sup> For Dutch Catholics, the first two bishops of Utrecht, Willibrord and Boniface (ca. 675-754/5), became emblems of Catholicism's revitalization in the 1630s Republic. Dutch Catholics capitalized upon the historical accounts of the two missionaries' triumphant conversion of pagans and their establishment of the original ecclesiastical hierarchy in the province of Utrecht. In effect, the association of Willibrord and Boniface served to reconnect the Dutch national identity with the Catholic Church after the Reformation.<sup>272</sup>

In response to the authority wielded by the Reformed Church, Catholic resistance to the Dutch Calvinists gained enough momentum to fuel a full-scale revival that began at the time of the Twelve Years Truce with Spain in 1609 and flourished by the 1630s.<sup>273</sup> Catholicism's resurgence coincided with the increasing popularity of images depicting Willibrord and Boniface, in general, and the production of *Ruins of the Chapel*, in particular. At the helm of the movement stood clerics known as the vicars apostolic who oversaw the loose network of Catholic priests and laypeople operating between 1592 and 1727 in the Protestant-dominated

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<sup>271</sup> Jacob van Royen discusses the depiction of Willibrord in Goeree's etching on the page following the illustration. Van Royen, *Antiquitates Belgicae of Nederlandsche Oudtheden*, 189, paragraph 33. For the life of Willibrord, see also Alban Butler, Sarah Fawcett Thomas, and Paul Burns, *Butler's Lives of the Saints* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1997), 52-60.

<sup>272</sup> Van Eck, "Dreaming of an eternally Catholic Utrecht during Protestant rule: Jan van Bijlert's *Holy Trinity with Sts Willibrord and Boniface*," 19, 21, 30; Knipping, *Iconography of the Counter Reformation in the Netherlands: Heaven on Earth*, 287-88; Mullett, *The Catholic Reformation*, 170-71.

<sup>273</sup> Refer to the sources cited in footnote 1 of this chapter. See also Frijhoff, "The Function of the Miracle in a Catholic Minority," 130; Rogier, *Geschiedenis van het Katholicisme in Noord-Nederland in de 16e en de 17e eeuw*, 438-79.

United Provinces.<sup>274</sup> Considered a papal mission by the Vatican at the end of the sixteenth century, the Northern Netherlands was restructured as the Holland Mission (*Missio Hollandica*) with apostolic vicars assigned to the territory whose main objective it was to reinstall the Roman Catholic Church.<sup>275</sup> Under Sasbout Vosmeer, the first vicar apostolic, and his successors, Philippus Rovenius and Johannes van Neercassel, the Dutch Catholic clergy grew in numbers from 220 priests in 1616 to twice that number by 1645.<sup>276</sup> As Xander van Eck has recently shown, the vicars apostolic deliberately propagandized the figures of Willibrord and Boniface as early as 1592 in their strategy to revive Catholicism.<sup>277</sup> Willibrord and Boniface became

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<sup>274</sup> For the catalogue of Catholic books published during the period of the vicars apostolic, the *Bibliotheca Catholica Neerlandica impressa* (BCNI), see Alphons van Dijk and W. M. Perquin, eds., *Bibliotheca Catholica Neerlandica impressa, 1500-1727* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1954).

<sup>275</sup> For a brief overview of the early *Missio Hollandica*, see Frijhoff and Spies, *1650: Hard-Won Unity*, 373; Israel, *The Dutch Republic: Its Rise, Greatness, and Fall, 1477-1806*, 377-85; Parker, *Faith on the Margins: Catholics and Catholicism in the Dutch Golden Age*, 184-85. On the organizers of the Catholic movement in the Republic, see Mathieu G. Spiertz, "De katholieke geestelijke leiders en de wereldlijke overheid in de Republiek der Zeven Provinciën," *Trajecta* 2, no. 1 (1993): 3-20.

<sup>276</sup> Frijhoff and Spies, *1650: Hard-Won Unity*, 374. Rovenius's contributions were particularly instrumental in supporting the Catholic cause in the Republic. Among other acts, he founded the first vicariate council in Utrecht in 1633, which united the city's priests with those in Haarlem, and he created the foundation for an ecclesiastical institution in the Northern Netherlands. On Rovenius, see Rogier, *Geschiedenis van het Katholicisme in Noord-Nederland in de 16e en de 17e eeuw*, 114; Jan Visser, *Rovenius und seine Werke. Beitrag zur Geschichte der nordniederländischen katholischen Frömmigkeit in der ersten Hälfte des 17. Jahrhunderts* (Assen: Van Gorcum & Comp., 1966), 16-21.

<sup>277</sup> Xander van Eck, "Dreaming of an eternally Catholic Utrecht during Protestant rule: Jan van Bijlert's *Holy Trinity with Sts Willibrord and Boniface*," *passim*. See also Georges Kiesel, *Der heilige Willibrord im Zeugnis der bildenden Kunst* (Luxembourg: Ministère des arts et des sciences, 1969); P. P. V. van Moorsel, "De devotie tot Sint Willibrord in Nederland van ong. 1580 tot ongeveer 1750," *Ons geestelijk Erf* 32 (1958): 129-70; Pontien Polman, *Godsdienst in de Gouden Eeuw*

popular subjects targeted for Dutch Catholic viewers in numerous paintings, prints, and illustrated books, and on liturgical objects and vestments.<sup>278</sup> For Dutch Catholic leaders, Willibrord and Boniface not only legitimized the Catholic Church as the Republic's national Church, but also unified Catholics living in provincial villages, including Heiloo, where the missionaries were known to work.

Willibrord was a particularly suitable figure for the vicars apostolic to provide consolation to Catholics living in and making pilgrimages to Heiloo because of his legendary creation of a sacred well there.<sup>279</sup> Artistic representations of Willibrord, such as Crispijn van de Passe's seventeenth-century engraving, *Saint Willibrord* (fig. 133), typically depict him with specific attributes: a miniature of Utrecht's cathedral, a wine cask, and a well or a water spout.<sup>280</sup> Van de Passe's engraving includes all

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(Utrecht and Brussels: Het Spectrum, 1947), 71-73; L. J. Rogier, "De cultus van sint Willibrord bij de apostolische vicarissen der Hollandse Zending in de zeventiende eeuw," *Historisch Tijdschrift* 18 (1939): 246-74; Rogier, *Geschiedenis van het Katholicisme in Noord-Nederland in de 16e en de 17e eeuw*, 762-66.

<sup>278</sup> Ibid., 21, 25-26; Frijhoff and Spies, *1650: Hard-Won Unity*, 383. See also Kiesel, *Der heilige Willibrord im Zeugnis der bildenden Kunst*, 220-21.

<sup>279</sup> The well dedicated to Saint Willibrord in Heiloo is different from the one consecrated to the Virgin Mary at the Chapel of Our Lady of Need in Oesdom. On the sacred wells in Heiloo, see The Hague, National Archives, States of Holland, res. 24 IX 1648; *Missio Hollandica* report of 1656: *Archief voor de geschiedenis van het Aartsbisdom Utrecht*, 11 (1882), 129-30, cited in Frijhoff, "The Function of the Miracle in a Catholic Minority," 114-15; Kronenburg, *Maria's Heerlijkheid in Nederland. Geschiedkundige schets van de Vereering der H. Maagd in ons Vaderland, van de broegste tijden tot op onze dagen*, 96-129. For a list of devotional prints depicting Willibrord with the shrines around Heiloo, see Staal and Wings, *Bedevoarten in Nederland*, 14, 110.

<sup>280</sup> On Magdalena van de Passe's engraving, see Staal and Wings, *Bedevoarten in Nederland*, 15, cat. no. H 19. Verheggen adds that the print's authorship has not yet been attributed to either Crispijn van de Passe the Elder (1564-1637), or his son, Crispijn van de Passe the Younger (1594-1670). Verheggen,

three attributes. Willibrord holds the small cathedral in the palm of his right hand while standing beside an overturned wine cask as he thrusts his crosier into the ground with his left hand, causing water to spurt from the ground into a well. The cathedral signifies the victory of Catholicism's ecclesiastical reunification in the Republic; the cask symbolizes a miracle that occurred on his feast day in which a cask provided an unending supply of wine; and the well refers to a miracle Willibrord performed in Heiloo in which he used his staff to find water in dry ground for his followers to drink.<sup>281</sup> As Willem Frijhoff has pointed out, wells in rural regions of the Dutch Republic were a source of magic and therapy for both Catholics and Protestants.<sup>282</sup> Protestants had concern that drawing water from wells at former Catholic places of worship could instigate devotees to conduct superstitious pilgrimages to the shrines. Yet they sought the therapeutic value of the wells' clean

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*Beelden voor Passie en Hartstocht: Bid- en devotieprenten in de Noordelijke Nederlanden, 17de en 18de eeuw*, 233, 235, 291 n. 12.

<sup>281</sup> For the iconography of Willibrord, see Van Eck, "Dreaming of an eternally Catholic Utrecht during Protestant rule: Jan van Bijlert's *Holy Trinity with Sts Willibrord and Boniface*," 25; Frijhoff, "The Function of the Miracle in a Catholic Minority," 130; Kiesel, *Der heilige Willibrord im Zeugnis der bildenden Kunst*, 220-21; Knipping, *Iconography of the Counter Reformation in the Netherlands: Heaven on Earth*, 287-88.

<sup>282</sup> Frijhoff adds that the numerous wells in the Republic evoked sacred and superstitious meanings for many Dutch people, particularly those who venerated at the shrines of Saint Adalbert in Egmond, Saint Engelmund in Velsen, Saint Boniface in Dokkum in Friesland, and the Virgin Mary in Keins. Frijhoff, "The Function of the Miracle in a Catholic Minority," 114-15. Muir notes that for Catholics, water obtained from sacred ground provided special powers that could facilitate fertility and prevent illness. Edward Muir, *Ritual in Early Modern Europe*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 164.



water to combat the constant threat of deadly diseases and floods, as they did at the well of Our Lady of Need during the 1713-14 cattle plague.<sup>283</sup>

In Goeree's etching, the juxtaposition of Willibrord with Heiloo's chapel suggests that the shrine, although an actual structure once located in a rural community, came to symbolize Dutch Catholicism. Given Willibrord's pronounced presence in Goeree's illustration and the image's striking similarities with the etching, *Ruins of the Chapel*, the ruins in *both* works—and Mary's figure in particular—promote the campaign of the vicars apostolic to preserve the pre-Reformation Catholic history of the Northern Netherlands and to reinstate Catholicism and pilgrimage activity in the Republic. Thus Mary, a type of “ruin” herself in light of her decline in popularity amongst Protestants after the Reformation, signifies for Dutch Catholics their religious past and the reconquest of their national Church.

In addition to Goeree's propagandistic figure of Willibrord, he also depicts a number of religious laywomen, or “spiritual virgins” amongst the pilgrims around the shrine.<sup>284</sup> As part of the method of the vicars apostolic to reinvigorate Dutch Catholicism, organizations of these women, called *kloppen* or *beguines*, replaced the orders of nuns that the Dutch Protestants banned after the Reformation. Their chief duties to assist priests, care for the poor and sick, disseminate devotional literature

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<sup>283</sup> See footnote 267.

<sup>284</sup> Parker, *Faith on the Margins: Catholics and Catholicism in the Dutch Golden Age*, esp. 44-45; Eugenie Theissing, *Over Klopjes en Kwezels* (Utrecht and Nijmegen: Dekker and Van de Vegt, 1935).

and prints, and teach young children, helped to preserve an infrastructure for Catholicism in the Holland Mission.<sup>285</sup>

In *Ruins of the Chapel*, the *kloppen* are identifiable by their matching dark, full-length garments that are cinched at the waist and the dark veils covering their heads. The Dutch Catholic artist and bookseller, Adriaan Schoonebeek, illustrated the typical garments worn by an Amsterdam *beguine* in his guide to religious vestments, *Nette afbeeldingen der eyge dragten van alle geestelyke orders* (Accurate Pictures of the Specific Clothing of all the Religious Orders) first published in 1688 in Amsterdam (fig. 134).<sup>286</sup> This prescribed style of dress for the *kloppen* readily distinguished them from nuns and ordinary laywomen. The dominant presence of *kloppen* in *Ruins of the Chapel* testifies to the print's direct connection with the Catholic faith and specific pilgrimage rituals in the Republic.

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<sup>285</sup> Non-Dutch parents also entrusted their children to the *kloppen* for their education. Frijhoff and Spies, *1650: Hard-Won Unity*, 378-80. According to Monteiro, the Dutch *kloppen* numbered approximately 5,000 by the end of the century. Monteiro, *Geestelijke maagden. Leven tussen klooster en wereld in Noord-Nederland gedurende de zeventiende eeuw*, esp. 32-33, 45-46, 49, 59-61, 204.

<sup>286</sup> I am grateful to Rebecca van Beem and Roger Noel for their assistance with the translation of this book title. Adriaan Schoonebeek, *Nette afbeeldingen der eyge dragten van alle geestelyke orders* (Amsterdam: Adriaan Schoonebeek, 1691), 39. On Schoonebeek's book, see Hedquist, "Rembrandt and the Franciscan Order of Amsterdam," 23-24; M. M. Kleerkooper and W. P. van Stockum Jr., *De boekhandel te Amsterdam, voornamelijk in de 17e eeuw. Biografisch en geschiedkundige aantekeningen*, 2 vols. (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1914-16), 714; Verheggen, *Beelden voor Passie en Hartstocht: Bid- en devotieprenten in de Noordelijke Nederlanden, 17de en 18de eeuw*, 85.

### ***Ruins of the Chapel* and Dutch Devotional Prints and Pilgrimage Rituals in the Seventeenth Century**

The *kloppen* and other pilgrims depicted in *Ruins of the Chapel* exhibit the reverent gestures and bodily movements prescribed by seventeenth-century pilgrimage rituals. Hermanus Verbeeck (1621-81), a Dutch Catholic from Amsterdam, described his experience as he watched pilgrims at Heiloo shrine in his autobiography, *Memoriaal*, writing that he “observed the old custom of crawling around on the holy spot on his hands and knees.”<sup>287</sup> The pilgrims depicted in *Ruins of the Chapel* comport themselves in accordance with Verbeeck’s memory of proper conduct during the pilgrimage ritual. The figures follow one another in an orderly procession along a circular dirt footpath at the base of a gently sloping mound from which the chapel wall projects.<sup>288</sup> Pilgrims placed at regular intervals circumnavigate the path in a clockwise direction. Beginning with the figures lightly etched in the background that seem to emerge from behind the right side of the chapel wall, the pilgrims walk together in small groups or alone. Several of the figures hold their hands in prayer or carry rosaries to demonstrate their reverence while others support themselves on crutches suggesting ailing health and their search for a miraculous cure as they maneuver themselves along the path.

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<sup>287</sup> Hermanus Verbeeck, *Memoriaal ofte mijn leven-sraijssinghe*, ed. Jeroen Blaak (Hilversum: Verloren, 1999), 27-28.

<sup>288</sup> Frijhoff notes that pilgrims typically worshipped at sacred shrines by processing around a structure three times in a rite called circumambulation. Frijhoff, “The Function of the Miracle in a Catholic Minority,” 115.

In the center foreground of *Ruins of the Chapel*, a male and female kneel beside the path facing Mary's glowing figure in the chapel wall. Another female pilgrim on the path at the left of the composition also stops to kneel in prayer. A trio of pilgrims at the base of the wall have removed their shoes and placed them in a pile to the left in front of the wall to signify the chapel's sacral ground. One of the three pilgrims prostrates on the ground, the second kneels, and the third—a female with her back facing the wall—grasps a slanted offertory box.<sup>289</sup> Seventeenth-century Dutch Catholics reportedly practiced the actual physical act of ritual prayer that the print depicts in its fascinating encyclopedic fashion of pilgrims with bare feet crawling, kneeling, prostrating, and worshipping silently.<sup>290</sup> The deeply reverential gestures the pilgrims exhibit toward Mary clearly identify the figures as Catholic pilgrims and not simply curious tourists.

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<sup>289</sup> Staal and Wingers first identified the slanted object as an offertory box in their analysis of an eighteenth-century print of Oesdom's chapel that closely resembles the one depicted in the etching under discussion. De Jongh's 1630 painting of the chapel's ruins, the first work of art portraying the chapel, also includes a similarly shaped box. By the eighteenth century, artists executing images of the chapel's ruins that they based on earlier pictorial precedents misinterpreted the box for a ladder leading to the chapel's cellar. Staal and Wingers, *Bedevearten in Nederland*, 107, cat. no. H 10. A notary document from the year 1618 mentions that money collected from the offertory box was distributed to the poor in Heiloo. Johan Belonje, "Iets over de kapel van O. L. Vrouw ter Nood," *Bijdragen voor de geschiedenis van het bisdom van Haarlem* 60 (1948): 235. Regionaal Archief Alkmaar, Gemeentearchief Alkmaar, Archieven notarissen, volume 53, folio 23, notary J. C. van der Gheest, 5 July 1618, cited in Thiers, *'T Putje van Heiloo. Bedevaarten naar O. L. Vrouw ter Nood*, 196 n. 17.

<sup>290</sup> Frijhoff notes that pilgrims performed these gestures while praying at sacred shrines in Amersfoort, Amsterdam, The Hague, Hasselt, Wilsveen, Utrecht, and elsewhere throughout the Republic. Frijhoff, "The Function of the Miracle in a Catholic Minority," 115-16.

Within the borders of the Dutch Republic numerous cities and villages, including Heiloo, hosted Catholic pilgrimages. In a major effort to inventory the sites, the P. J. Meertens Institute recently published a series of volumes on the history of pilgrimage in the Netherlands and presented its research on a massive online database under the title *Bedevaartplaatsen in Nederland* (Places of Pilgrimage in the Netherlands).<sup>291</sup> In addition to Heiloo, the Institute cites other popular pilgrimage destinations in the seventeenth-century Republic: Aardenburg, Amersfoort, Bergen op Zoom, and Elshout. Yet during that century, artists paid significant attention only to the chapel of Our Lady of Need.<sup>292</sup> This focus placed on Heiloo's shrine may reflect

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<sup>291</sup> On the methodological approaches employed in Dutch pilgrimage research utilized in the *Bedevaartplaatsen in Nederland* volumes, see Peter Jan Margry and Paul Post, "The 'Places of Pilgrimage in the Netherlands' Project," in *The Modern Pilgrim: Multidisciplinary Explorations of Christian Pilgrimage*, ed. Paul Post, Jos Pieper, and Marinus van Uden, *Liturgia condenda* (Leuven: Peeters, 1998), 49-88. The Institute has published four volumes to date since 1997. For the volume pertaining to pilgrimage in the vicinity of Heiloo in North Holland, see Peter Jan Margry and Charles Caspers, eds., *Bedevaartplaatsen in Nederland. Noord- en Midden-Nederland*, 1:445-46. The Institute's website is impressively rich with information, images and visual culture outlining the history of Dutch pilgrimage to the present day. For the website, see Meertens Instituut, "Databank Bedevaart en Bedevaartplaatsen in Nederland," KNAW/Meertens Instituut, <http://www.meertens.knaw.nl/bedevaart> (accessed July 23, 2009). On pilgrimage in the Netherlands, see also Frijhoff, "Bedevaart, heiligheid, sacraliteit: op weg naar een nieuw historisch onderzoeksprogramma," 183-202; Peter Jan Margry and Paul Post, "Het project 'Bedevaartplaatsen in Nederlands': een plaatsbepaling," *Volkskundig Bulletin. Tijdschrift voor Nederlandse cultuurwetenschap* 20, no. 1 (1994); Peter Jan Margry, "Cults and Pilgrimage Sites in the Netherlands," in *Saints of Europe. Studies Towards a Survey of Cults and Culture*, ed. Graham Jones (Donington: Shaun Tyas Publishing, 2003); Peter Jan Margry and Paul Post, "Wallfahrt zwischen Inventarisierung und Analyse. Ein niederländisches Forschungsprojekt in historiographischem und methodologischem Kontext," *Rheinischwestfälische Zeitschrift für Volkskunde* 39 (1994 [1995]): 27-65.

<sup>292</sup> For the history of pilgrimages at shrines located in Heiloo, see C. Streefkerk, *Heiloo voor en na Willibrord. Opstellen over de geschiedenis van Heiloo*

the success of Catholic strongholds in north Holland. Willem Frijhoff has noted that the highest numbers of Dutch Catholics lived in the Republic's coastal regions, including Heiloo, and that the most heated demonstrations against Protestant political control occurred in these areas.<sup>293</sup> As Th. Clemens has demonstrated, the coastal provinces served as crucial channels for the import and export of Catholic devotional literature and prints, which helped to strengthen Catholicism in those rural territories.<sup>294</sup> The Catholic book trade, Clemens argues, not only originated from the Catholic Southern Netherlands as other scholars have posited, but also from booksellers in the Republic—including those with Calvinist confessional allegiances—who published Catholic material to satisfy the demands of the northern

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(Heiloo: Gemeente Heiloo, 1995). On late medieval pilgrimages in the Netherlands, see Jan van Herwaarden, *Opgelegde Bedevaarten. Een studie over de Praktijk van Opleggen van Bedevaarten, met name in de stedelijke Rechtspraak in de Nederlanden gedurende de late middeleeuwen, ca. 1300-1500* (Assen and Amsterdam: Van Gorcum, 1978).

<sup>293</sup> Protestants reported incidents of Catholic uprisings in Heiloo and in the neighboring city of Alkmaar into the eighteenth century. For example, on Sunday, May 2, 1734, Catholics in Alkmaar and Heiloo hung ropes from the pulpits and on the benches in Protestant churches that were reserved for the cities' prominent residents. Frijhoff, "The Function of the Miracle in a Catholic Minority," 183.

<sup>294</sup> The leading Catholic publishers and booksellers in the Republic included: Elzevier, Blaeu, De Lorme, and the Huguetan brothers. Clemens notes that some of the publishers added false imprints to their frontispieces as protection against Calvinist censorship. Th. Clemens, "The Trade in Catholic Books from the Northern to the Southern Netherlands, 1650-1795," in *Le Magasin de l'Univers: The Dutch Republic as the Centre of the European Book Trade. Papers Presented at the International Colloquium, held at Wassenaar, 5-6 July 1990*, ed. Christiane Berkvens-Stevelinck, et al., *Brill's Studies in Intellectual History* (Leiden, New York, Copenhagen, and Cologne: E. J. Brill, 1992), 86, 90. See also I. H. van Eeughen, "De Acta Sanctorum en het drukken van katholieke boeken te Antwerpen en Amsterdam in de 17e eeuw," *De Gulden Passer* 28 (1953): 50-51; Lienke Paulina Leuven, *De boekhandel te Amsterdam door katholieken gedreven tijdens de Republiek* (Epe: Hooiberg, 1951).

market. The sale and production of Catholic literature and images in the Republic testify to the strength of Catholicism and, in particular, the large numbers of its followers in rural areas, including the region around Heiloo.<sup>295</sup>

Even with the widespread distribution of Catholic literature and images in the Republic, Protestant suppression of public forms of Catholic worship continued unabated throughout the seventeenth century. Protestants in the United Provinces initiated numerous strategies to wield power over Dutch Catholics since the time the Reformed Church was established in 1572—one year before the destruction of Heiloo's shrine. Although members of the Reformed faith comprised only a small minority of the Dutch population, 1572 the States General elected it the dominant, albeit informal, ecclesiastical institution of the Republic.<sup>296</sup> The Reformed Church thus became the "public religion" of the Republic, controlling all rights, privileges, and property that had previously been accorded to the Catholic Church. The States General quickly classified all forms of Catholic public worship, specifically

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<sup>295</sup> Clemens focused his analysis of the Catholic book trade in the United Provinces between the years of the Peace of Westphalia of 1648 until the fall of the Republic in 1795. Clemens, "The Trade in Catholic Books from the Northern to the Southern Netherlands, 1650-1795," 86.

<sup>296</sup> Charles H. Parker, *The Reformation of Community: Social Welfare and Calvinist Charity in Holland, 1572-1620*, ed. Sir John Elliott, Cambridge Studies in Early Modern History (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 6-7. See also, A. Th. van Deursen, "Kerk of parochie? De kerkmeesters en de dood tijdens de Republiek," *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis* 89 (1976): 531-35; Van Lieburg, "From Pure Church to Pious Culture: The Further Reformation in the Seventeenth-Century Dutch Republic," 412.

pilgrimage, as illegal and punishable by heavy fines, including the June 23, 1587 Proclamation issued by the States of Holland.<sup>297</sup>

Despite the bans on pilgrimage, Dutch Catholics in the Northern Netherlands continued to worship at former Catholic shrines. Catholics resorted to conducting their rituals under the cover of darkness. In a rare painted example of a nighttime pilgrimage scene, Gerard ter Borch's *Procession with Flagellants* (fig. 135), ca. 1636-40, depicts an outdoor procession dense with figures carrying a Marian cult statue through a crowd. A group of flagellants lead the procession wearing white hooded garments as they whip their bloody backs.<sup>298</sup> Ter Borch intensifies the dark, nocturnal setting with torches that cast specks of light barely enough to illuminate the environment virtually engulfed in total blackness. Arthur K. Wheelock posits that the

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<sup>297</sup> For the 1587 Proclamation, see Cornelia Cau et al., *Groot placact-boeck, vervattende de placaten, ordonnantien ende edicten van de doorluchtige, hoogh mog. heeren Staten Generael der Vereenighde Nederlanden.*, 10 vols. (The Hague: Hillebrandt Jacobsz van Wouw, 1658-1796), 219-20, quoted in Frijhoff, "The Function of the Miracle in a Catholic Minority," 112. See also Van Deursen's discussion of the Proclamation and the Calvinist promotion of it as a means to cleanse Dutch society of Catholic superstitions. A. Th. van Deursen, *Plain Lives in a Golden Age: Popular Culture, Religion and Society in Seventeenth-Century Holland*, 241-42. Frijhoff notes that the States of Friesland banned pilgrimages when they joined the States General in 1580; Groningen instituted the prohibition when surrendering to the States in 1594. Frijhoff, "The Function of the Miracle in a Catholic Minority," 112. For the controversies and debates surrounding religious pilgrimage after the Reformation, see Muir, *Ritual in Early Modern Europe*, 155-56, 159.

<sup>298</sup> Arthur Wheelock argues that Ter Borch may have derived inspiration for his painting from a similar work by Pieter van Laer of a procession of flagellants in Rome. The author posits that Ter Borch may also have been influenced by his observations of Catholics during his travels in Spain, and his fascination with the effects of light in painting that he learned from Pieter Molijn. Arthur K. Wheelock et al., *Gerard ter Borch*, 50-52, cat. no. 3.



women in Ter Borch's processional scene distinctively wear Dutch clothing and that he probably painted the work while living in the Republic.<sup>299</sup>

Wheelock's hypothesis suggests the possibility that Ter Borch may have observed or been keenly aware of the Dutch practice of making pilgrimages at night at the approximate date of *Ruins of the Chapel*. Certainly, the artist that etched *Ruins of the Chapel* may have intended to portray a nocturnal pilgrimage scene similar to Ter Borch's painting. The unusually strong shadows created by the effects of Mary's glowing body in Ter Borch's work evoke the sense that the landscape would be in total darkness without Mary's presence.

In 1647 governmental authorities posted placards warning against late-night pilgrimages in Heiloo and its environs as well as at the chapels of the Miraculous Holy Sacrament in Amsterdam and Our Lady of Eikenduinen near The Hague.<sup>300</sup> Nevertheless, the apostolic vicars reported to Rome in 1638 and 1656 that innumerable pilgrims visited the chapel of Our Lady of Need, specifically to venerate Mary.<sup>301</sup> A large-scale engraved map from 1704, *'t Hyló-er Ryskaartje* (Pilgrimage

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<sup>299</sup> Ibid., 52.

<sup>300</sup> Frijhoff, "The Threshold of Toleration: Interconfessional Conviviality in Holland during the Early Modern Period," 59. See also Willem Frijhoff, "Ritual Action and City History: Haarlem, Amsterdam, and Hasselt," in *Urban Rituals in Italy and the Netherlands: Historical Contrasts in the Use of Public Space, Architecture and the Urban Environment*, ed. Heidi de Mare and Anna Vos (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1993), 93-106; Peter Raedts, "Le Saint Sacrement du Miracle d'Amsterdam: lieu de mémoire de l'identité catholique," in *Lieux de mémoire et identités nationales*, ed. Pim den Boer and Willem Frijhoff (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1993), 237-51. For the placards that forbade pilgrimage in Heiloo, see Thiers, *'t Putje van Heiloo. Bedevaarten naar O. L. Vrouw ter Nood*, 197 n. 24.

<sup>301</sup> Jacobus de la Torre, "Descriptio status, in quo anno 1638 erat religio catholica in Hollandia. . . ." *Archief Aartsbisdom Utrecht* 12 (1884): 189-213, 414-33;

Map of Heiloo) (fig. 136), also provides conclusive evidence of the continued pilgrimages to Heiloo's shrine. The map charts the pilgrimage route between the cities of Alkmaar, Heiloo, and the Marian shrine south of Heiloo, which is labeled as "Capel" in the lower center of the map. The chapel was of course destroyed long before the map's creation, proving that pilgrimages to the shrine persisted. The multitude of inns, mills, farmhouses, and wells marked on the map also indicate that local residents tolerated pilgrims and willingly provided them with food and shelter. Substantial numbers of pilgrims must have assembled in the area for a long period of time in order to develop the vast network of Catholic-friendly rest areas shown on the map.<sup>302</sup>

Yet despite the efforts of Rovenius and the *kloppen* to encourage Catholic worship, and the apparent popularity of the shrine at Heiloo, the majority of seventeenth-century Dutch Catholic pilgrims made excursions to shrines located outside the Republic. The foreign sites with the heaviest traffic from Dutch pilgrims in the period included those in the cities of Scherpenheuvel in the Southern

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Jacobus de la Torre, "Relatio seu descriptio status religionis catholicae in Hollandia etc. Quam Romae collegit et exhibuit Alexandro septimo et cardinalibus congregationis de propaganda fide, Jacobus de la Torre, Kal. Septembris Anno 1656." *Archief Aartsbisdom Utrecht* 11 (1884): 57-211, quoted in Thiers, *'t Putje van Heiloo. Bedevaarten naar O. L. Vrouw ter Nood*, 197 n. 24.

<sup>302</sup> The map pinpoints the locations of several accommodations that were presumably suitable for pilgrims, such as "'t Stalleken van Bethlehem" (The Stable of Bethlehem). The map also indicates routes the pilgrim could take to navigate from one site to another: by foot or water. Thiers, *'t Putje van Heiloo. Bedevaarten naar O. L. Vrouw ter Nood*, 24.

Netherlands and Kevelaer in Germany, just across the Dutch border near Venray.<sup>303</sup>

For these and other Marian pilgrimage shrines, artists created an astounding quantity of devotional prints for pilgrims to collect as souvenirs, such as the Flemish artist Frederik Bouttats's engraving, *Mary of Kevelaer* (fig. 137), ca. 1640-76.<sup>304</sup> As in the case of Bouttats's print, most images of this genre were produced by Flemish artists in Antwerp and exported to the shrines for resale.<sup>305</sup> Unlike *Ruins of the Chapel*, however, devotional prints created as souvenirs for the Marian shrines at Scherpenheuvel and Kevelaer are typically small in size and depict Mary's body as separate from rather than integrated with the shrine's architecture. The disconnection

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<sup>303</sup> On seventeenth-century Dutch pilgrimages to foreign destinations, see Luc Duerloo and Marc Wingens, *Scherpenheuvel. Het Jeruzalem van de Lage Landen* (Leuven: Davidsfonds, 2002); Laurens de Keyzer, *Wees gegroet Maria. Mariaorden in de Lage Landen* (Antwerp: Icarus, 1997); Knipping, *Iconography of the Counter Reformation in the Netherlands: Heaven on Earth*, 240; Wingens, *Over de grens. De bedevaart van katholieke Nederlanders in de zeventiende en achttiende eeuw*.

<sup>304</sup> Fully supported by the *Missio Hollandica*, Kevelaer served as one of the most popular destinations for Dutch pilgrims following the spread of news of Mary's miraculous appearance there in 1642. Frijhoff and Spies, *1650: Hard-Won Unity*, 382. For the catalogues from recent exhibitions of Kevelaer's numerous processional flags that were used in pilgrimages to the site, and the devotional guidebooks and prints for the shrine's pilgrims, see Robert Plötz, *Maria Kevelaer im Bild. Vera effigies Matris Iesu* (Kevelaer: Niederrheinisches Museum für Volkskunde und Kulturgeschichte Kevelaer, 1987); Robert et al. Plötz, *Kevelaer. 350 Jahre Wallfahrt ohne Grenzen* (Kevelaer: Stadt Kevelaer, 1992).

<sup>305</sup> On Catholic devotional prints produced in Antwerp, see Paul Begheyn and Evelyn M. F. Verheggen, *Een teruggevonden kerkschat. Kopergravures van Wierix* (Hooglanderveen: Trepico, 2001); Jozef Peeters, Jan van Hemelryck, and L. Smets, *In het Paradijs. Devotieprenten van de 15de tot de 20ste eeuw* (Sint-Truiden: Provinciaal Museum voor Religieuze Kunst, 1988); Thijs, *Antwerpen internationaal uitgeverscentrum van devotieprenten, 17de-18de eeuw*; Alfons K. L. Thijs, "Devotieprenten en geloofsbeleving. De rol van de Antwerpse produktie uit de 17de en de 18de eeuw," *Oostvlaamse Zanten* 64 (1989): 235-52; Evelyn M. F. Verheggen, "Antwerpse devotieprenten met handgeschreven teksten uit de 17de eeuw in de Republiek," *Volkskunde* 98, no. 1 (1997): 41-51.

between Mary and the architectural component of the images suggests that she is not as integral a component of the shrine—either physically or visually—as she appears in the ruins of Heiloo’s chapel.

In the Sherpenheuvel and Kevelaer prints, Mary usually fills the pictorial space in the immediate foreground, and located behind her in a distant topographical landscape pilgrims follow one another in processions through the sites’ church and village architecture. The names of the tiny cities and their architectural monuments visible behind Mary’s large body are inscribed in the scenes, because otherwise the sites would be almost indistinguishable. The lack of emphasis placed on the architectural setting of the prints in favor of Mary in the foreground underscores their pictorial dissimilarity to *Ruins of the Chapel*.

The most significant difference between *Ruins of the Chapel* and other devotional prints associated with other shrines lies in the rendering of Mary’s figure. In Bouttats’s *Mary of Kevelaer*, for example, the artist portrays Mary in a flattened manner that sharply contrasts her naturalistic pose in *Ruins of the Chapel*. Mary wears a bulky mantle and veil in Bouttats’s print that stiffly hangs from her body in a wide, triangular shape making her appear as if she floats in midair. Mary’s sharp, geometric outline is based on cult statues and the angular clothing that adorns them in western European churches, which became formulaic for her depiction in devotional images associated with pilgrimage sites throughout the Northern and Southern Netherlands, Austria, and the Germanic states. A few examples of this mode of Mary’s representation include Peter Clouwet’s 1697 souvenir print of Mary for pilgrims at a

shrine in Maastricht (fig. 138); the frontispiece for Justus Lipsius's 1605 guide to the shrine in Halle (fig. 139); a 1679 Flemish devotional guide's illustration of Mary at the shrine in Scherpenheuvel (fig. 140); and Maurits Lang's 1668 print of Mary for the shrine at the monastery of the Mariahilfberg in Gutenstein, Austria (fig. 141).<sup>306</sup>

The subtle differences in Mary's portrayal from one devotional print to another, with the exception of *Ruins of the Chapel*, as David Freedberg has observed, are extremely difficult to distinguish.<sup>307</sup> The level of scrutiny required to differentiate the attributes and geographic references in the prints aids in the meditative process. Freedberg cites, for example, the Jesuit Wilhelm von Gumppenberg's compendium of 1,200 Marian shrines worldwide and the cult images associated with them, *Atlas Marianus* (Marian Atlas), first published in 1657 in the German city of Ingolstadt.<sup>308</sup>

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<sup>306</sup> Clouwet produced his souvenir print of Mary for the Church of Our Lady in Maastricht. The church contains a fifteenth-century cult image that associates Mary with one of her traditional titles, the "Star of the Sea." For Mary's iconographic relationship to the star, see Warner, *Alone of All Her Sex: The Myth and the Cult of the Virgin Mary*, 255-69, esp. 261-67. On Clouwet's print, see Verheggen, *Beelden voor Passie en Hartstocht: Bid- en devotieprenten in de Noordelijke Nederlanden, 17de en 18de eeuw*, 139, fig. 6.61. See also P. Beda Verbeek, *De geschiedenis van de Sterre der Zee te Maastricht tot 1804*, vol. 1, *Collectanea Franciscana Neerlandica* (Den Bosch: Tuelings, 1937). Justus Lipsius published numerous Marian devotional guidebooks to promote patriotism through the public practice of Catholicism and pilgrimage in the Southern Netherlands. De Landtsheer, "Justus Lipsius's Treatises on the Holy Virgin," 65-88. For Lang's print, see Clemens Anton Lashofer, Gregor Martin Lechner, and Michael Grünwald, *"Unter deinen Schutz . . ." Das Marienbild in Göttweig* (Furth: Stift Göttweig, 2005), 135.

<sup>307</sup> Freedberg, *The Power of Images: Studies in the History and Theory of Response*, 113, 115.

<sup>308</sup> Wilhelm Gumppenberg, *Atlas Marianus sive de imaginibus deiparae per orbem christianum miraculosis* (Ingolstadt: G. Hænlin, 1657). On Gumppenberg's depictions of Mary in the book, see Monique Scheer, "From Majesty to Mystery: Change in the Meanings of Black Madonnas from the Sixteenth to Nineteenth Centuries," *The American Historical Review* 107, no. 5 (December 2002): 1421-37.

Von Gumpenberg's index provided an opportunity for viewers to embark upon a virtual pilgrimage from the privacy of their own homes, or to include the book with devotional images acquired during an actual pilgrimage. Freedberg suggests that the numerous similarities in Mary's depiction in the images invite the viewer to study them closely and visualize them as a series conceptually tied to the act of pilgrimage.<sup>309</sup>

Freedberg points out that von Gumpenberg's illustrations of the most iconic representations of Mary, including *The Virgin of Rocamadour* (fig. 142) and *The Virgin of Guadalupe* (fig. 143), replicate her in an identical pyramidal shape with only minor differences, such as in the decoration of her mantle or her arm to which the Christ child affixes himself.<sup>310</sup> In stark contrast to this group of images, however, Mary's mantle in *Ruins of the Chapel* falls in loose folds along the contours of her body resting upon the crescent moon, and her figure is immured in the deep cavity in the chapel's wall.

The obvious pictorial similarities of the prints depicting pilgrimage to Marian shrines raises the question of why the artist of *Ruins of the Chapel* chose to diverge from this popular pictorial convention. Mary's unique pyramidal shape in the other pilgrimage prints transforms her image into a facsimile that pictorially and spiritually links her to a vast network of shrines. Their location or their particular, reputed miraculous powers is not important. Mary serves as both the focus for pilgrims during

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<sup>309</sup> Freedberg, *The Power of Images: Studies in the History and Theory of Response*, 115.

<sup>310</sup> Ibid., 113.

their actual prayer and meditation as well as an emblem of the practice of pilgrimage itself. This emblematic Mary in *Ruins of the Chapel* is excluded from this paradigm. In *Ruins of the Chapel*, Mary serves as a richer and more specific symbol of Catholicism's revival in the Dutch Republic, rather than pilgrimage in general.

### **Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Netherlandish Devotional Prints of the Immaculate Conception**

Mary's powerful role as the virgin queen that enables her to function as humanity's ultimate intercessor is underscored in *Ruins of the Chapel* by the attributes of the Immaculate Conception—her understood freedom from the stain of humanity's original sin that supports the validity of Christ's incarnation.<sup>311</sup> Her portrayal as the Queen of Heaven bathed in radiant light turns the everyday event of pilgrimage into a momentous occasion. Mary reminds the viewer of her miraculous Assumption through the pointed crown awarded to her at the time of her ascension and by directing the viewer's gaze upward toward the sky with the angle of her regal scepter.<sup>312</sup> The carefully delineated moon beneath her feet embodies a powerful meaning when visualized in conjunction with the Virgin. According to Marina Warner, in Marian theology the moon reflects the light of the sun to Earth in the way

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<sup>311</sup> The Catholic Church's position on Mary's capability of sin was not clarified until Augustine. He pronounced that Adam and Eve's sin could not logically be transferred to Mary because as the mother of God, she must be morally perfect. The dogma of the Immaculate Conception did not become doctrine, however, until Pope Pius IX's 1854 bull, *Ineffabilis Deus*, which proclaimed Mary, free from original sin, as second only to Christ in her perfection. Warner, *Alone of All Her Sex: The Myth and the Cult of the Virgin Mary*, 236, 238-39.

<sup>312</sup> Ibid., 103.

Mary reflects the light of God to humankind.<sup>313</sup> The moon relates Mary to the “great wonder” described in the Book of Revelation (12:1): “clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars.” Mary’s moon also derives from the Song of Solomon (6:10) in which the beloved “looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun.”<sup>314</sup> Taken together, the moon, the aureole of light around Mary’s body, and her blue mantle signify her virginity, perfection, and fertility.<sup>315</sup> The viewer of *Ruins of the Chapel*, therefore, would have understood the print’s complex iconography of the Immaculate Conception to stand for Mary’s ultimate supremacy as the mother of Christ on the one hand, and her immortality predestined to her by God on the other. The viewer would also likely have associated the iconography of the Immaculate Conception with the Roman Catholic faith in light of the image’s popularity in seventeenth-century European art for Catholic audiences, as in the example of Diego Velázquez’s painting of ca. 1618 (fig. 144).

The Immaculate Conception in *Ruins of the Chapel* relates not to the way in which artists depict Mary in prints associated with popular pilgrimage shrines as previously shown, but instead to the numerous devotional prints that were not affiliated with specific shrines. In the Museum Catharijneconvent’s representative collection of Catholic art, more than 100 different devotional prints of Mary depict

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<sup>313</sup> Ibid., 259.

<sup>314</sup> Ibid., 256.

<sup>315</sup> Other attributes of the Immaculate Conception that signify Mary’s wisdom and purity can include cherubim, the twelve stars of the Apocalypse, a corn sheath, and an olive branch. The color blue symbolizes the never-ending space and light of the sky and sea—Mary’s two principal iconographic attributes—that underscores her eternal life. Ibid., 248, 266.



her in an impressive variety of scenes, narratives, and roles, all of which relate to *Ruins of the Chapel* in the treatment of her figure and her identity as a celestial queen.

Like the prints designed as souvenirs for pilgrimage shrines, the devotional prints in the Museum Catharijneconvent collection are small in size and many are hand-colored. The prints can be categorized into the following groups: prayer cards; half-length and full-length portraits of Mary with Christ; scenes from the life of Mary and Christ; portraits of Mary with Anne; Mary's Assumption; and the Immaculate Conception. The largest number of images that focus on Mary or Mary with the Christ child present the iconography of the Immaculate Conception, the chief iconographic trait in *Ruins of the Chapel*. Within the context of the Immaculate Conception theme, Mary usually appears with a radiant aureole and the crescent moon at her feet. For example, in G. Collaert's print from the seventeenth century, *The Immaculate Conception* (fig. 145), Mary's windswept garments fall to her sides along the length of her body as she stands elegantly on the sickle moon with stars and light rays framing her tender face.

The sinuous curves of the garments covering Mary's slender body in *Ruins of the Chapel* and the inclusion of her attributes as queen and the Immaculate relate closely with her depiction in two of the collection's prints, both entitled *Refugium Peccatorum* (Refuge of Sinners) (figs. 146-47); the first work dates from the seventeenth century and the second from ca. 1775. In these prints, Mary holds the Christ child and a scepter while standing on a slender crescent moon atop a large orb in a style that resembles her depiction in *Ruins of the Chapel*. The rays of light or

stars that emanate from Mary's head signify her as immaculate—a trait often excluded from the devotional prints of Mary for foreign pilgrimage shrines that commemorate their cult statues. The pictorial model for Mary in *Ruins of the Chapel*, therefore, correlates most closely with the collection of devotional prints in the Museum Catharijneconvent, which suggests the popularity of the Immaculate Conception theme in Dutch Catholic art during the seventeenth century.

Debates and controversies centered on the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception swept through Europe in the fifteenth century and reached their height in the seventeenth century. Reformers staunchly objected to the perception of Mary as free from humankind's stain of original sin due to the total lack of textual evidence in the canonical Gospels to support the dogma.<sup>316</sup> Seventeenth-century Catholics, on the other hand, aggressively upheld Mary's perfection. The Council of Trent reaffirmed the doctrine, and the Jesuits followed suit by promoting the Immaculate Conception in devotional literature and art as a means to assert Rome's ecclesiastical power.<sup>317</sup>

Indeed, the Catholic Church endorsed the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception to connect Mary's eternal invincibility to that of the Church.<sup>318</sup> As Marina Warner has shown, since the Middle Ages the Church conceived of itself as akin to the nurturing, feminine moon signified by Mary, which differed from Christ and the masculine sign of the sun that he evoked.<sup>319</sup> Mary's representation as

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<sup>316</sup> Ibid., 238, 244-45.

<sup>317</sup> For the seventeenth-century debates on the Immaculate Conception between the Dominicans and Jesuits, see Ibid., 241, 247-49, 267.

<sup>318</sup> Ibid., 261-62.

<sup>319</sup> On Mary as a symbol of the Roman Catholic Church, see Ibid., 103-6, 256.

immaculate in artistic renderings thus doctrinally unifies her with the Roman Catholic Church, the point of which Jan van Eyck made abundantly clear long before the seventeenth century in his painting, *Madonna of the Church* (fig. 148), ca. 1438-40. Van Eyck enlarges Mary in the Gothic church so that she fills the space, thus equating her body with the structure itself.

As John Knipping has demonstrated, the theme of the Immaculate Conception grew in popularity along with the development of the Counter Reformation as a device to defend Mary, and by extension the authority of the Church, against Protestant attacks.<sup>320</sup> Patronage amongst Catholics increased exponentially for images of the theme to also quell internal debates between Jesuits and Dominicans over the moment in which Mary was sanctified—at the time of her conception, or at the time she entered the womb of her mother.<sup>321</sup> Sermons on the nature of Mary's conception forced a series of popes to repeatedly ban public criticism of the doctrine, including Paul V in 1616, and Gregory XV in 1622, with support later offered by Urban VIII and Alexander VII. All this controversy stimulated the popularity of the theme in art.<sup>322</sup>

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<sup>320</sup> Knipping, *Iconography of the Counter Reformation in the Netherlands: Heaven on Earth*, 245-50.

<sup>321</sup> Warner, *Alone of All Her Sex: The Myth and the Cult of the Virgin Mary*, 241, 247-49.

<sup>322</sup> Michael Wayne Cole and Rebecca Zorach, eds., *The Idol in the Age of Art: Objects, Devotions and the Early Modern World* (Farnham, England, and Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Co., 2009), 300; Warner, *Alone of All Her Sex: The Myth and the Cult of the Virgin Mary*, 241, 249. See also Mirella Levi d'Ancona, *The Iconography of the Immaculate Conception in the Middle Ages and the Early Renaissance* (New York: College Art Association of America/Art Bulletin, 1957); Edward Dennis O'Connor, *The Dogma of the Immaculate Conception* (Notre Dame:

In demonstration of the doctrine's legitimacy, patrons commissioned works of the Immaculate Conception by leading artists, including Peter Paul Rubens, Maarten de Vos, Jerome Wierix, Guido Reni, and Francisco de Zurbarán. At the same time, Jesuit writers, including Jan David and Petrus Biverus, endorsed the doctrine in their devotional treatises. In regard to art produced in seventeenth-century Naples, James Clifton recently examined the Church's appropriation of Immaculate Conception iconography for sermons, lavish feasts, and public processions in response to plagues, social unrest, and the eruption of Mount Vesuvius.<sup>323</sup> In Spain, paintings of the Immaculate Conception reached their peak of popularity in the seventeenth century. Bartolomé Esteban Murillo's numerous works, such as his *Immaculate Conception* of 1665-70 (fig. 149), portray Mary as young, beautiful, and submissive, clothed in the sun as *Maria in sole*—the very likeness of Mary that the Church could use to substantiate its claims about her freedom from original sin.

In the Northern Netherlands, the theme of the Immaculate Conception emerges in a colorful triptych, *Mary with Child Surrounded by the "Laudes Marianae"* (Praises of Mary) (fig. 150), ca. 1615, by an artist who might have

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University of Notre Dame Press, 1958), 312; Pelikan, *Mary Through the Centuries: Her Place in the History of Culture*, 188-200; Jaroslav Pelikan, *Reformation of Church and Dogma (1300-1700)*, *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 4:45-50.

<sup>323</sup> James Clifton, "Art and Plague at Naples," in *Hope and Healing: Painting in Italy in a Time of Plague, 1500-1800*, ed. Gauvin Alexander Bailey, et al. (Worcester, MA, and Chicago: Clark University, College of the Holy Cross, Worcester Art Museum, and the University of Chicago, 2005), 99-101.

originated from Utrecht.<sup>324</sup> The center panel of the triptych depicts Mary trampling on a winged demonic animal with the sickle of her moon beneath her feet. She holds the Christ child loosely in her left arm, and a scepter in her right hand. Behind Mary appear the shining rays of her aureole and twelve medallions signifying her praises. At the upper center of the scene, God and the Holy Ghost, represented by a white dove, observe her as two angels proceed to place a brilliant gold crown upon her head. The iconography of the Immaculate Conception and Mary's relationship to the Roman Catholic Church—specifically that which existed in the Northern Netherlands—become strengthened in the artist's juxtaposition of her with the priest, Johan Ludolfs van Rhenen, from the village of Vleuten near Utrecht, pictured in the right inner wing.<sup>325</sup> Furthermore, the right outer wing of the triptych (fig. 151), which depicts the early missionaries of the Northern Netherlands, Willibrord and Boniface, solidifies Mary's crucial role both in the context of the triptych and in Dutch Catholic art as the powerful Immaculate in the revival of seventeenth-century Catholicism.

Mary's dual identity by the seventeenth century as humanity's intercessor to God in heaven and a symbol of the Roman Catholic Church serves as the underlying message of the *Laudes Marianae* triptych as well as *Ruins of the Chapel*. The symbols of Mary's royalty depicted in the etching, her crown and scepter, in addition

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<sup>324</sup> The triptych's middle panel measures 140 x 70 cm; the outer wings are each 141 x 28.5 cm. Defoer et al., *Goddelijk geschilderd. Honderd meesterwerken van Museum Catharijneconvent*, 132-34, cat. no. 37; Dijkstra, Dirkse, and Smits, *De schilderijen van Museum Catharijneconvent*, 358-59.

<sup>325</sup> On Ludolfs and his depiction in the altarpiece, see Casper H. Staal, "Johan Ludolph van Rhenen, vicaris te Vleuten, paap op Den Ham en redder van de Cunera-reliken," *Jaarboek Oud-Utrecht* (1996): 69-86.

to those of her Immaculate Conception, the aureole and crescent moon, underscore her primary identity as not only the virgin Queen of Heaven, but also as the agent of the Church. Given the political and religious strife in the United Provinces between Catholics and Protestants in the seventeenth century, the provocative assertion of the Church's authority must refer specifically to the supremacy felt by Dutch Catholics over the heretical Calvinist Reformers. This assertion of the Church's authority is absent in devotional prints for foreign pilgrimage shrines, but in *Ruins of the Chapel*, functions not only to inspire religiosity within the viewer, but also politically as Roman Catholic propaganda against the Dutch Republic's Calvinist hegemony.

The cartouche engraved above Mary's body in *Ruins of the Chapel* further underscores the print's polemical message. The symbols and text inscribed in the cartouche imply that the perpetrators of the shrine's initial destruction in 1573, though not identified in the print or its poem, were Protestants and not the Spanish Catholics who laid siege to the Alkmaar region in 1573. According to Ottie Thiers, orders to demolish Heiloo's chapel may have come from the Dutch Calvinist Diederik Sonoy, governor of the northern quarter of Holland during the Spanish occupation and an ardent persecutor of Catholics. Sonoy may well be responsible for tearing down the Church of Our Lady of Need given that he destroyed the castle and abbey in Egmond, and the Church of St. Willibrord in Heiloo—all of which were located in the vicinity of Heiloo.<sup>326</sup>

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<sup>326</sup> Thiers, *'t Putje van Heiloo. Bedevaarten naar O. L. Vrouw ter Nood*, 20. See also Arnold C. M. Burger, *Het Kasteel van Egmond. Een schets van de ontwikkeling van het 'Slot op den Hoef'* (Schoorl: Pirola, 1988); M. J. Kuipers-

Whether destroyed by Dutch Calvinists or by Spanish Catholics, demolition of the shrine in 1573 marked the beginning of the Reformed Church's ecclesiastical hegemony in the Republic and the subsequent suppression of Catholics. The description in the cartouche of the chapel's razing in the year 1637 indicates the success of Catholicism's revival. By juxtaposing the cartouche that chronicles the lifespan of the chapel's architecture with pilgrims processing around ruins that no longer existed, the work implies the perseverance of Dutch Catholics to remain loyal to their religious convictions. The reminder of the chapel's total destruction in the cartouche must have aroused overpowering anti-Calvinist sentiments in Catholic viewers. The cartouche, therefore, captures and reflects the tumultuous religious and political history of the chapel and references as well the divide between Catholics and Protestants.

The artist's choice *Ruins of the Chapel* to represent Mary in the iconographic context of the Immaculate Conception in conjunction with a recognizable place of worship located within Dutch borders suggests the Catholic Church's effort toward ecclesiastical reunification in the Republic. Mary's supervision of a peaceful, uninterrupted Catholic pilgrimage at a recognizable shrine on Dutch soil suggests the continued strength of Catholicism in the Republic and its aggressive stance against the Protestant government's prohibition on public displays of Catholic religiosity. By

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Verbuijs et al., *Ruïnes in Nederland* (Zwolle: Waanders, 1997), 232-26; Kuretsky, *Time and Transformation in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Art*, 24; Seymour Slive, *Jacob van Ruisdael: A Complete Catalogue of His Paintings, Drawing and Etchings* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), 43-46; Peter C. Sutton, *Masters of 17th-Century Dutch Landscape Painting* (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, 1987), 465.

virtue of the inexpensive, small scale of the print medium, the artist of *Ruins of the Chapel* exercised considerable freedom to produce and quickly disseminate the polemical scene more liberally than any artist working in paint. *Ruins of the Chapel*, therefore, also underscores the crucial function of prints for Dutch Catholics to communicate their confessional allegiances and the growing antipathy they felt toward the Calvinists during this period of Catholicism's revival.



## CHAPTER FOUR

### Rembrandt's the *Death of the Virgin*, Cartesianism, and Modernity in the Seventeenth-Century Dutch Republic

Rembrandt's etching and drypoint, the *Death of the Virgin* (fig. 152), signed and dated 1639, captures the early seventeenth-century religious and scientific attitudes toward Mary and Marian devotion, dying rituals, and the perception of the soul in the Dutch Republic.<sup>327</sup> Rembrandt depicts the dramatic moment of Mary's death known as the *Transitus Matris Dei* (transition of the mother of God), usually referred to as her Dormition, *Koimesis*, or falling asleep.<sup>328</sup> The print features Mary

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<sup>327</sup> I am grateful for the thoughtful suggestions and encouragement given to me during the preparation of this chapter by the students in Prof. Linda Stone-Ferrier's 2001 seminar, "Rembrandt," at The University of Kansas. I also appreciate the comments given to me by the audiences of three conferences at which I presented earlier versions of this chapter: "Women and Holiness: Approaching the Sacred Feminine in Visual Culture," on January 28, 2005 at Brigham Young University; the Women Art Patrons and Collectors Conference, "Constructions of Death, Mourning, and Memory," held on October 29, 2006 in Woodcliff Lake, New Jersey; and "Power and Image in Early Modern Europe," on April 8, 2008 at New York University. The papers were published in the conference proceedings. Elissa Anderson, "The Cartesian Body: Immateriality in Rembrandt's *The Death of the Virgin*," in *Constructions of Death, Mourning, and Memory, October, 27-29, 2006, Proceedings*, ed. Lilian H. Zirpolo (Woodcliff Lake, NJ: The WAPACC Organization, 2006), 183-86; Elissa Auerbach, "Taking Mary's Pulse: Cartesianism and Modernity in Rembrandt's *The Death of the Virgin*," in *Power and Image in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Jessica Goethals, Valerie McGuire, and Gaoheng Zhang (Newcastle upon Tyne, United Kingdom: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2008), 95-118. For a recent study of Rembrandt's the *Death of the Virgin*, which was published too late for me to include fully in this dissertation, see Shelley Perlove and Larry Silver, *Rembrandt's Faith: Church and Temple in the Dutch Golden Age* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2009), 45-50.

<sup>328</sup> *Transitus*, or *transito*, refers to the physical passage (*migratio ad Dominum*) of Mary's soul to heaven, but it does not imply her Assumption. The terms are synonymous with Mary's Dormition—the temporary state of sleep before her Assumption. Therefore, the Dormition refers to period after her death and

lying in repose on an elaborately carved canopied bed flanked on both sides by at least twenty attendants. The uppermost part of the thick curtains that enclose the death chamber disappear into brilliant celestial clouds that bear floating angels gazing upon Mary's lifeless body. A solemn doctor in the center of the composition, the only figure to have direct bodily contact with Mary, authoritatively holds her wrist to monitor her pulse while the throng of male and female witnesses mourn, pray, and in other ways preoccupy themselves. Through Rembrandt's manipulation of the effects afforded by the sharp point of his burin, he converts the dying body of Mary from a corporeal being into a faint, immaterialized entity. Mary's unearthly form dispels any corporeal affinities with the witnesses surrounding her, which implies the imminent division of her body and soul at the moment of her heavenly resurrection.

On one hand, the *Death of the Virgin*'s easily recognizable biblical subject epitomizes the premodern world and its preoccupation with theological doctrine, superstition, and religious faith. On the other hand, the print demonstrates an engagement with secularization, individualism, rationalization, empiricism, and open debate—central tenets of modernity—that evolved in the early seventeenth-century

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immediately prior to her spiritual and corporeal resurrection. Pamela Askew, *Caravaggio's Death of the Virgin* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), 20-1. The Eastern Church established the Feast of the Dormition by the year 600; it is commemorated each year on August 15. The Western Church adopted the feastday by around 650. The Western Church changed the name of the day to the Feast of the Assumption by the ninth century to underscore the significance of Mary's Assumption over her Dormition. Although the Dormition and Assumption were long part of Catholic doctrine, the Catholic Church did not define Mary's Assumption as dogma until 1950 under Pope Pius XII. Warner, *Alone of All Her Sex: The Myth and the Cult of the Virgin Mary*, 81-82. On Mary's early history in the Eastern and Western Churches, see Stephen James Shoemaker, *Ancient Traditions of the Virgin Mary's Dormition and Assumption* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

Dutch Republic. The image manifests specific pioneering ideas associated with modernity, namely those of the French philosopher René Descartes, which surfaced in the Republic in the mid-1630s as part of the Scientific Revolution. Rembrandt presents a relatively secular scene by placing a stern, respectable doctor—unprecedented in Dormition imagery—at the focal point of his composition. He transforms the sacred space of Mary’s death chamber into a setting that is completely devoid of any Roman Catholic or Protestant confessional motifs that one would expect in an image of the Dormition produced in the Calvinist-dominated Northern Netherlands. The doctor and the secular space suggest innovative, contemporary attitudes toward science, meaning empirical and mechanical methods of systematically examining the world in separate fields, including biology, medicine, mathematics, and rational philosophy. Rembrandt’s decision to depict the Dormition—a highly unusual subject considering its traditional religious connotations—further underscores the print’s unconventional iconography.

While a popular subject with artists in the Middle Ages and Renaissance, by the seventeenth century the death of Mary had fallen out of fashion.<sup>329</sup> By 1639, the subject was atypical in European art. Indeed, Rembrandt’s conception of Mary’s death was so original and unexpected that a Dutch publisher of a Bible from 1680 used the print to illustrate the narrative of Jacob’s death, and an eighteenth-century French collector, Dézallier d’Argenville, mistakenly identified the print’s subject as

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<sup>329</sup> Josua Bruyn has rightly acknowledged the rarity of the Dormition theme in seventeenth-century art. Josua Bruyn, *Rembrandt's keuze van bijbelse onderwerpen* (Utrecht: Kunsthistorisch Instituut der Rijksuniversiteit, 1959), 9.

St. Anne's death.<sup>330</sup> Christian Tümpel contends that Rembrandt's exceedingly wide range of unusual biblical subjects originates from the pictorial models that he most likely studied in Bibles and sixteenth-century prints by German and Netherlandish artists, such as Lucas van Leyden and Albrecht Dürer.<sup>331</sup> His direct knowledge of the Dormition's pictorial precedents, however, does not explain why the artist chose to depict an unpopular, archaizing theme in this particular year on a grand scale of 40.8 x 31.4 cm—one of the eight largest extant prints the artist produced.<sup>332</sup> The viewer is

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<sup>330</sup> For a seventeenth-century illustrated Dutch Bible that includes Rembrandt's print as a depiction of Jacob's death, see Melchior Küsel, *Icones Biblicae Veteris et Novi Testamenti* (Nuremberg: Johann Leonhard Buggel, 1680). For a discussion of the illustrated Bible, see Ludwig Münz, *A Critical Catalogue of Rembrandt's Etchings and the Etchings of His School Formerly Attributed to the Master with an Essay on Rembrandt's Technique and Documentary Sources* (London: Phaidon Press, 1952), 211. On d'Argenville, see Dézallier d'Argenville, *Abrege de la vie des plus fameux peintres* (Paris: De Bure, 1745-52), 2:28. See also Marijn Schapelman, "The Death of the Virgin, 1639," in *Rembrandt the Printmaker* ed. Erik Hinterding, Ger Luijten, and Martin Royalton-Kisch (Chicago and London: Fitzroy Dearborn Publishers, 2000), 164.

<sup>331</sup> Christian Tümpel, *Rembrandt legt die Bibel aus: Zeichnungen und Radierungen aus dem Kupferstichkabinett der Staatlichen Museen Preußischer Kulturbesitz Berlin* (Berlin: Bruno Hessling, 1970), n.p; Christian Tümpel, *Bijzondere bijeenkomst der afdeling letterkunde op maandag 13 maart 1972* (Amsterdam: Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen, 1972), 12.

<sup>332</sup> All of Rembrandt's large-scale prints depict themes from the New Testament. Only eight of his prints are longer than 27 cm in height or width. The *Death of the Virgin* is second smallest of these eight prints; *The Hundred Guilder Print* (27.8 x 38.8 cm) is the smallest. Three states of this print are extant. Each state varies in its degree of hatching, crosshatching, roulette, and drypoint to intensify its depth of field. The composition remains unchanged after the first state. Hinterding notes that the *Death of the Virgin* was Rembrandt's first large print that he made after *Descent from the Cross* (B. 81) and before *Christ before Pilate* (B. 77). He adds that the significance of the print lies in its contrast between light and dark that he achieves by sketchily rendering some forms, such as Mary's body, in contrast to more highly worked areas, including the curtain in the background. This is also the first print into which Rembrandt incorporated an extensive use of drypoint. In a close analysis of the three states, Hinterding notes that Rembrandt signed and dated the first state. He

also left to wonder what prompted Rembrandt's remarkable iconographic experimentation with the theme's pictorial conventions.

Three distinct elements of Rembrandt's composition stand apart from other extant scenes of the Dormition produced before 1639: the ethereal portrayal of Mary, underscoring the primacy of her soul over her physical form; the complete omission of standard liturgical objects or motifs associated with either Catholic or Protestant

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added hatching to the chair in the composition with drypoint in the second state. The third state shows evidence of considerable hatching with a mezzotint rocker, which is a tool Rembrandt did not use indicating that he is probably not responsible for the third state. Erik Hinterding, *Rembrandt as an Etcher: The Practice of Production and Distribution*, ed. Craig Hartley Peter Fuhring, Ger Luijten, Jan Van der Stock, trans. Michael Hoyle, *Studies in Prints and Printmaking* (Ouderkerk aan den IJssel, the Netherlands: Sound & Vision Publishers, 2006), 6:99, 99-102, esp. 100. See also Gordon W. Nowell-Usticke, "The Death of the Virgin," in *Rembrandt's Etchings, States and Values* (Narberth, PA: Livingston Publishing Co., 1967), n.p. For a description of the changes Rembrandt made between the three states, refer to Clifford S. Ackley, *Rembrandt's Journey: Painter, Draftsman, Etcher* (Boston: MFA Publications, 2003), 138; Erik Hinterding, Ger Luijten, and Martin Royalton-Kisch, *Rembrandt the Printmaker*, 164; Münz, *A Critical Catalogue of Rembrandt's Etchings and the Etchings of His School Formerly Attributed to the Master with an Essay on Rembrandt's Technique and Documentary Sources*, cat. no. 208; Tümpel, *Rembrandt legt die Bibel aus: Zeichnungen und Radierungen aus dem Kupferstichkabinett der Staatlichen Museen Preußischer Kulturbesitz Berlin*, n.p., cat. no. 127; Christopher White, *Rembrandt as an Etcher: A Study of the Artist at Work* (University Park and London: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1969), 44, 158; Williams, *Rembrandt's Women*, 165. For the print, see also Karel G. Boon, *Rembrandt: The Complete Etchings* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., Publishers, 1963), n.p; Colin Campbell, "Rembrandts etsen *Het Sterfbed van Maria en De drie bomen*," *Kroniek van het Rembrandthuis* 32, no. 2 (1980): 2-33; Van der Coelen, *Rembrandts passie. Het Nieuwe Testament in de Nederlandse prentkunst van de zestiende en zeventiende eeuw*, 172-74; Barbara Welzel, "The Death of the Virgin," in *Rembrandt: The Master and His Workshop, Drawings and Etchings*, 203-5. The last known owner of the plate was Claude-Henri Watelet, a French collector who purchased it at the De Haan sale in 1767 in Amsterdam. The plate survived into the nineteenth century, but is now considered lost. Erik Hinterding, "The History of Rembrandt's Copperplates with a Catalogue of Those That Survive," *Simiolus* 22, no. 4 (1993-94): 305; Christopher White, *Rembrandt as an Etcher: A Study of the Artist at Work*, 16 n. 24.

deathbed scenes; and the doctor—a signifier of reason and empirical science—presiding in the center of the image. Combined together in a work based on the quintessentially Roman Catholic narrative of Mary’s death, these three remarkable traits create a thoroughly modern approach to the subject. Rembrandt’s unique iconographic modifications to Mary’s death, therefore, ultimately convey the inherent tension in modernity between tradition and progress that developed in the early seventeenth century, as well as Europe’s gradual cultural shift from religiosity to secularism. That is, Rembrandt’s conception of Mary’s death intertwines traditional notions of Catholicism with the seventeenth-century intellectual climate of the Scientific Revolution.<sup>333</sup>

### **The Reception of Rembrandt’s the *Death of the Virgin***

Rembrandt’s unprecedented convergence of sacred and secular realms in *Death of the Virgin* could conceivably have erupted into a theological controversy. Evidence suggests, however, that audiences reacted positively to the image. The monumental size of the print and the multiple runs that Rembrandt made of it indicate not only the image’s significance to the artist, but also the immense popularity it had among his patrons. This work’s commanding physical presence and intricacy of detail

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<sup>333</sup> On the general scientific advancements of the early modern period, see Wiep van Bunge, *From Stevin to Spinoza: An Essay on Philosophy in the Seventeenth-Century Dutch Republic*, vol. 103, Brill’s Studies in Intellectual History (Leiden, Boston, and Cologne: Brill, 2001); Israel, *Radical Enlightenment: Philosophy and the Making of Modernity, 1650-1750*; George Molland, "Science and Mathematics from the Renaissance to Descartes," in *The Renaissance and Seventeenth-Century Rationalism*, ed. G. H. R. Parkinson, *Routledge History of Philosophy* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), 104-39.

alone would have made it expensive and a prized purchase for Rembrandt's discerning print collectors. In Erik Hinterding's important study of the image, he used connoisseurship to demonstrate that Rembrandt reprinted the work at least four times before he died.<sup>334</sup>

Patrons coveted not only the *Death of the Virgin*, but also Rembrandt's numerous other Marian works. He portrayed Mary more often than any other female figure in his *oeuvre* in which the depiction of women comprises a substantial portion.<sup>335</sup> The sheer number and variety of Rembrandt's images of Mary testify to their popularity and positive reception amongst his patrons. In addition, we can surmise that a high demand existed for his works depicting intellectuals and scientists. Rembrandt produced many works on these subjects, such as *Scholar Reading* (fig. 153), 1631, *Jan Six* (fig. 154), 1647, and *A Scholar in his Study (Faust)*

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<sup>334</sup> Three of the four states were produced in 1639, 1646, and 1653. The third state was reprinted at least eight times, but all of the impressions are posthumous, according to the author. Hinterding, *Rembrandt as an Etcher: The Practice of Production and Distribution*, 100-2.

<sup>335</sup> Rembrandt depicted approximately 850 scenes from the New Testament in his *oeuvre*—at least 150 of these works represent Mary in at least thirty-five different themes. Of Rembrandt's eight largest prints, the *Death of the Virgin* is the only picture in which Rembrandt presents Mary as a central figure. For an overview of Rembrandt's biblical images, see Carroll, "Rembrandt as Meditational Printmaker," 585-610; William H. Halewood, *Six Subjects of Reformation Art: A Preface to Rembrandt* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982); Willem Adolf Visser 't Hooft, *Rembrandt and the Gospel* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1958), 19; Manuth, "Denomination and Iconography: the Choice of Subject Matter in the Biblical Painting of the Rembrandt Circle," 235-52; Schillemans, *Bijbelschilderkunst rond Rembrandt*; Seymour Slive, *Rembrandt Bible Paintings* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1956); Christian Tümpel, "Studien zur Ikonographie der Historien Rembrandts, Deutung und Interpretation der Bilden halte," *Nederlands Kunsthistorische Jaarboek* 20 (1969); Tümpel, *Rembrandt legt die Bibel aus: Zeichnungen und Radierungen aus dem Kupferstichkabinett der Staatlichen Museen Preußischer Kulturbesitz Berlin*, n.p.

(fig. 155), ca. 1652, to note just a few examples. Rembrandt's the *Death of the Virgin* and its combination of religious and secular components, therefore, plays a dual role in the artist's longstanding fascination with biblical narratives and images of figures engaged in intellectual pursuits. From this evidence we can deduce that the *Death of the Virgin* would have interested a fertile market of intellectuals, scientists, philosophers, and liberal-minded religious audiences who comprised the growing avant-garde of seventeenth-century European society.<sup>336</sup>

Most scholars maintain that Rembrandt intended the *Death of the Virgin* for Catholic patrons regardless of its unusual subject and the artist's highly unorthodox iconographic modifications.<sup>337</sup> Given the fact that the Dormition and Assumption

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<sup>336</sup> Karel Boon posits that Rembrandt's divergence from artistic convention is due to his residence after 1631 in Amsterdam—a city that prided itself on religious tolerance. Boon writes, "for him there was no border between his imagination and reality. He built his world from his memories of the work of others and from his observations of his own surroundings." Karel G. Boon, *Rembrandt: The Complete Etchings*, n.p. Svetlana Alpers argued that Rembrandt deliberately manipulated prototypical iconographic motifs in an unusual manner so as to express his artistic individuality and the distinctly Protestant characteristic of his personality. Alpers states, "Rembrandt did not simply hide his sources. He resisted the lure of authority offered by a canonical work in order to show that he was making it his own." Svetlana Alpers, *Rembrandt's Enterprise: The Studio and the Market* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1988), 77.

<sup>337</sup> Nadine Orenstein contends that Catholic collectors in Amsterdam must have commissioned the print from Rembrandt due to its subject matter. Nadine M. Orenstein, "Rembrandt's *Death of the Virgin*," in *Rembrandt/Not Rembrandt in The Metropolitan Museum of Art: Aspects of Connoisseurship*, ed. Walter Liedtke, et al. (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art and Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1995), 206 n. 1. On Rembrandt's intention to sell his print to Catholic patrons, see also Ronald R. Bernier, "The Economy of Salvation: Narrative and Liminality in Rembrandt's *Death of the Virgin*," *Religion and the Arts* 9, no. 3/4 (2005): 178; Holm Bevers, "Rembrandt as an Etcher," in *Rembrandt: The Master and His Workshop, Drawings and Etchings*, 203; Anat Gilboa, *Images of the Feminine in Rembrandt's Work* (Delft: Eburon, 2003), 57, 59. Kok claims that Rembrandt's early biblical imagery follows



were firmly entrenched in Roman Catholic art and devotion, and that Protestants staunchly rejected the doctrine of Mary's resurrection due to its derivation from the New Testament Apocrypha, such an interpretation of Rembrandt's intention seems likely. Irena Zdanowicz states, for example, "This subject must be seen as typically Catholic" because of "fundamental criticism that was leveled by Protestantism against the excessive devotion to the Virgin traditionally practiced by the Roman Church."<sup>338</sup> Another scholar, Marijn Schapelhouman, questions whether Rembrandt's unusual iconographic modifications in his print on a "distinctly Roman Catholic theme" could

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literary and pictorial precedents. He states that Rembrandt only deviates from convention in his later religious works, "in order to bring out the universal significance of the Bible stories." Jan Piet Filedt Kok, *Rembrandt. Etchings and Drawings in the Rembrandt House* (Maarssen: Gary Schwartz, 1972), 39. On Rembrandt's allegiance to convention in his biblical imagery, see also Bruyn, *Rembrandt's keuze van bijbelse onderwerpen*. Christian Tümpel argues that Rembrandt remained largely independent from the iconographic model of his literary and pictorial sources so as to either underscore a theme's original meaning or make the scene more morally expressive. Christian Tümpel, "Studien zur Ikonographie der Historien Rembrandts, Deutung und Interpretation der Bilden halte," 15. See also Jan Białostocki, "A New Look at Rembrandt Iconography," *Artibus et Historiae* 5, no. 10 (1984): 12-13. The only scholar to argue for an intended Protestant audience for the *Death of the Virgin* is Brom who argues that Rembrandt Protestantized the iconography of the image by eliminating recognizable objects commonly used in Catholic liturgical ceremonies and modifying the scene in ways that include: removing the burning candle used in extreme unction; portraying the scene as a church service with contemporary figures; and "playfully" changing elements like the tall staff so it could not comply with a confessional purpose. Brom claims that Rembrandt's changes to the scene are "Protestant," yet he does not explain how any of these points are in accordance with Protestantism. Gerard Brom, "De traditie in Rembrandt's *Dood van Maria*," *Oud Holland* 43 (1926): 114-16.

<sup>338</sup> Zdanowicz contends that we cannot know whether Rembrandt received a commission for this print or if he intended it for the general Catholic market. Irena Zdanowicz, "Etchings by Rembrandt (cat. nos. 99-122)," in *Rembrandt: A Genius and His Impact*, ed. Albert Blankert (Zwolle: Waanders Publishers, 1997), 400. On Rembrandt's work for multiple denominations in Amsterdam, refer to Manuth, "Denomination and Iconography: the Choice of Subject Matter in the Biblical Painting of the Rembrandt Circle," 236; Williams, *Rembrandt's Women*, 165.

appeal to Catholics, but she concludes that it did because he would not create such a large, complex print simply for his “own pleasure.”<sup>339</sup> By not fully interpreting Rembrandt’s unusual print and assuming the possibility that its seemingly traditional subject could be inappropriate for Protestant audiences, scholars overlook the print’s complex meaning and function.

The *Death of the Virgin* does not, in fact, represent a traditional theological interpretation of Mary’s death.<sup>340</sup> Rembrandt does not cater solely to a specific body of Catholic clients, nor would the image have simply functioned to satisfy his own artistic desires. Rather, the print evokes a complex array of intellectual and scientific ideas that permeated Rembrandt’s seventeenth-century cultural context and thus would have appealed to audiences who likewise were engaged with those concepts. In the body of this chapter, I will demonstrate the ways in which Rembrandt clearly set aside a singular Roman Catholic interpretation of Mary’s death by modifying and/or omitting standard iconographic motifs of the Dormition. Thus, the print would not have appealed to orthodox Catholic viewers. In turn, the print’s apocryphal subject and iconographic elements reminiscent of Catholic theological doctrine would not

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<sup>339</sup> Schapelman, “The Death of the Virgin, 1639,” 162.

<sup>340</sup> None of the previous scholarship on Rembrandt’s print proposes an alternative reading of the scene as anything but an image of the Dormition despite the artist’s numerous modifications to the theme. See Bernier, “The Economy of Salvation: Narrative and Liminality in Rembrandt’s *Death of the Virgin*,” 173-207; Bevers, “Rembrandt as an Etcher,” 160-69; Brom, “De traditie in Rembrandt’s *Dood van Maria*,” 112-16; Bob Haak, *Rembrandt: His Life, Work and Times* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1969), esp. 161; Nowell-Usticke, “The Death of the Virgin,” n.p; Hans-Martin Rotermond, *Rembrandt’s Drawings and Etchings for the Bible*, trans. Shierry M. Weber (Philadelphia and Boston: Pilgrim Press, 1969), 7; White, *Rembrandt as an Etcher: A Study of the Artist at Work*, 2nd ed., 43-46; Williams, *Rembrandt’s Women*, 165.

have appealed to orthodox Protestant viewers either. Rembrandt's adventurous experimentation with the traditional iconographic representation of Mary's death counters all of the theme's literary and pictorial precedents, as well as its theological significance. An examination of the image within its seventeenth-century cultural context can reveal its fullest meaning.

### **The Theological Meaning of the Dormition, and Its Literary and Pictorial Tradition**

Evidence of modernity in Rembrandt's the *Death of the Virgin* is found in the way the image presents a non-theological account of Mary's death. Rembrandt removed Roman Catholic signs and symbols included in all of the theme's previous literary and pictorial precedents that are known to me. The conspicuous placement of the secular doctor, whose role is out of place in a biblical narrative, call into question the print's confessional proclivity. According to Catholic theological doctrine, Mary and Christ are the only two figures to experience a corporeal assumption in both body and soul; this became a serious point of contention between Catholics and Protestants after the sixteenth century.<sup>341</sup> Protestants firmly proclaimed that Mary's Assumption was ahistorical. Luther asserted, "The feast of the Assumption is totally papist, full of

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<sup>341</sup> The Catholic Church after the Council of Trent emphasized an unearthly quality about Mary with light, angels, lilies, and corn sheaves in scenes particularly of the Assumption as a means to underscore her immaculate conception and virginity. On the post-Reformation Protestant and Catholic response to Mary's death and Assumption, see Sally Cunneen, *In Search of Mary: The Woman and the Symbol*, 210. In addition to Mary and Christ, apocryphal texts of the New Testament proclaimed that St. John the Evangelist also experienced a bodily assumption after his death. Jeffrey F. Hamburger, *St. John the Divine: The Deified Evangelist in Medieval Art and Theology* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002).

idolatry and without foundation in the Scriptures. But we, even though Mary has gone to heaven, should not bother about how she went there.”<sup>342</sup> For Catholics, however, Mary’s corporeal assumption supports three underlying tenets of Catholicism: the validation of Mary’s perfection; the divine nature of Christ and his incarnation; and the transcendence of God. The division of Mary’s body and soul at her death and their subsequent reunification in heaven is a basic and necessary principle of Christianity for Catholics.

In 1602, the Counter-Reformation Church reaffirmed Mary’s historical death and Assumption when Pope Clement VIII incorporated the Dormition in Catholic liturgy.<sup>343</sup> Other Catholics, including Cardinale Cesare Baronius, also spoke out about the similarity between the real deaths and resurrections of Christ and Mary.<sup>344</sup> Since Mary’s corporeal assumption implies her resurrection, Mary must have died a real death according to the Church, a belief supported by seventeenth-century Dutch Catholics, such as Petrus Purmerent, a secular priest in Gouda who commissioned

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<sup>342</sup> Luther eliminated the feastday of the Assumption from the Lutheran calendar in 1544. Thomas F. O’Meara, *Mary in Protestant and Catholic Theology* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1966), 118. For a brief summation of Mary’s life in art and the history of Mary in Catholic and Protestant doctrine, see Katz, "Regarding Mary: Women's Lives Reflected in the Virgin's Image," 19-123. Refer also to Sergiusz Michalski, *The Reformation and the Visual Arts: The Protestant Image Question in Western and Eastern Europe*, 36, 89; Warner, *Alone of All Her Sex: The Myth and the Cult of the Virgin Mary*, 94-95, 97.

<sup>343</sup> For the Catholic Church’s stance on Mary’s death in the seventeenth century, refer to Steven F. Ostrow, *Art and Spirituality in Counter-Reformation Rome: The Sistine and Pauline Chapels in S. Maria Maggiore* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996). Russell states that Mary’s corporeal and spiritual assumption was necessary for the Catholic Church to support Mary’s virginity and her role as intercessor between God and mankind. Russell, *Eva/Ave: Woman in Renaissance and Baroque Prints*, 76.

<sup>344</sup> Russell, *Eva/Ave: Woman in Renaissance and Baroque Prints*, 90.

Marian art.<sup>345</sup> The heated theological debates between Catholics and Protestants about Mary's death and glorification in heaven suggest the timeliness of Rembrandt's print, yet the debates do not explain his unusual iconographic modifications to the subject's pictorial conventions.

The theological understanding of Mary's death as a precursor to her corporeal and spiritual assumption in heaven was an established theme in art from the Byzantine period onwards. The chronicle of Mary's death, the *Transitus Mariae* (Transition of Mary), derives from more than sixty-four apocryphal texts of the New Testament that date from the second century in the pre-Byzantine period.<sup>346</sup> Jacobus

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<sup>345</sup> John Joseph McCarthy, "The Death of Mary: An Historical and Theological Study" (M.A. thesis, St. Joseph's Seminary, 1958), 13. On Purmerent and other artistic commissions for Dutch Catholic churches in the seventeenth century, see Xander van Eck, "From Doubt to Conviction: Clandestine Catholic Churches as Patrons of Dutch Caravaggesque Painting," *Simiolus* 22 (1993-94): 222.

<sup>346</sup> The earliest apocryphal texts addressing Mary's Assumption are attributed to the author Pseudo-Melito from the fourth or fifth century, and Pseudo-John from the sixth century. The Syriac tradition of Mary's death began at the end of the fifth century following St. Epiphanius (367-403) who declared that the events of her death are unknown. Epiphanius's statement led to a spate of Marian legends on the Dormition that ranged from descriptions of the apostles resuscitating Mary to angels intervening on her death. McCarthy, "The Death of Mary: An Historical and Theological Study," 2, 5; George H. Tavard, "The Genesis of Mariology," in *A Feminist Companion to Mariology*, ed. Amy-Jill Levine with Maria Mayo Robbins (London and New York: T & T Clark International, 2005), 113. On the main apocryphal accounts of Mary's Dormition, particularly those by Pseudo-Melito and Pseudo-John, refer to Mary Clayton, *The Apocryphal Gospels of Mary in Anglo-Saxon England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 25; Shoemaker, *Ancient Traditions of the Virgin Mary's Dormition and Assumption*. See also Michel van Esbroeck, *Aux origines de la Dormition de la Vierge*, Variorum Collected Studies Series (Aldershot, Hampshire, Great Britain: Ashgate, 1995); Maurice Geerard, *Clavis apocryphorum Novi Testamenti* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1992), 74-95. On the Cult of the Virgin, see Michael P. Carroll, *The Cult of the Virgin Mary: Psychological Origins* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986); Cunneen, *In Search of Mary: The Woman and the Symbol*; Graef, *Mary: A History of Doctrine and Devotion*;

de Voraigne's hagiographic handbook, *Legenda aurea* (Golden Legend), 1255-66, served as one of the most popular compilations of the saints' lives for artists from the later Middle Ages. It was a likely literary source for Rembrandt's print.<sup>347</sup> Concern over Mary's soul after her death takes precedence, in the *Legenda aurea*, over all of the events of her last days; the entire narrative is framed with the understanding that first her soul and then her body would be assumed miraculously into heaven.

The *Legenda aurea* begins the account of the Dormition with an angel who informs Mary of her coming death, declaring:

See, Lady, I have brought you a palm branch from paradise, and you are to have it carried before your bier. Three days from now you will be assumed from the body, because your Son is waiting for you, his venerable mother.<sup>348</sup>

After the angel's announcement to Mary, the apostles were brought by clouds from all parts of the world where they had been preaching to join Mary at her deathbed, followed shortly thereafter by Christ and a multitude of mourners:

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Laurentin, *A Short Treatise on the Virgin Mary*; Pelikan, *Mary Through the Centuries: Her Place in the History of Culture*; Warner, *Alone of All Her Sex: The Myth and the Cult of the Virgin Mary*.

<sup>347</sup> According to Mâle, seventeenth-century artists continued to rely upon the *Legenda aurea* as their chief hagiographic sourcebook. He states that artists continued to depict apocryphal subjects because the post-Reformation Catholic Church allowed them to do so, but that the "serious-minded no longer gave them credence." Émile Mâle, *Religious Art from the Twelfth to the Eighteenth Century* (New York: Pantheon Books, Inc., 1949), 190, 192. My references to the *Legenda aurea* derive from the recent translation, De Voragine, *The Golden Legend: Readings on the Saints*, 77-97.

<sup>348</sup> In the last section of the legend entitled, "How Mary was Assumed into Heaven," the palm branch is described as "an assurance of victory over the corruption of death," which signifies Mary's corporeal and spiritual assumption. De Voragine, *The Golden Legend: Readings on the Saints*, 78, 89.

When blessed Mary saw all of the apostles assembled, she thanked the Lord and sat in their midst, surrounded by lighted torches and lanterns. About the third hour of the night Jesus came with companies of angels, troops of prophets, hosts of martyrs, a legion of confessors and choirs of virgins, and all took their places before the Virgin's throne and sang dulcet canticles.<sup>349</sup>

The legend concludes with Christ, Mary, and a cantor singing to each other until the moment of the Virgin's death:

Then Mary's soul went forth from her body and flew to the arms of her Son and was spared all bodily pain, just as it had been innocent of all corruption.<sup>350</sup>

After her death, Mary's body was washed by three virgins, which was then placed on a bier and carried by the apostles to a tomb. Before they reached the tomb, the Jewish populace, as reported in the legend, attempted to overturn the bier and disrupt her burial, but angels in the clouds interceded, staved off the crowd, and allowed the procession to continue. The apostles buried Mary's body and three days later, Christ and the archangel Michael arrived at the tomb to revive her corpse. Christ said to Mary at the moment of her resurrection, "As you never knew the stain of sin through carnal intercourse, so you shall never suffer dissolution of the flesh in the tomb."<sup>351</sup> The narrative culminates with Mary's Assumption "in soul and body":

Thereupon Mary's soul entered her body, and she came forth glorious from the monument and was assumed into the heavenly bridal chamber, a great multitude of angels keeping her company.<sup>352</sup>

Clearly, Rembrandt's the *Death of the Virgin* contains many of the essential elements of the Dormition described in the *Legenda aurea*, including the angels,

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<sup>349</sup> The legend mentions that 120 virgins were present at Mary's death and burial. Ibid., 79.

<sup>350</sup> Ibid., 80.

<sup>351</sup> Ibid., 82.

<sup>352</sup> Ibid.

female mourners and the male figures that may represent the prophets, martyrs, confessors, and the apostles.<sup>353</sup> Yet, the artist omitted numerous other details, making strange and unexpected iconographic modifications more conspicuous. For example, he chose to exclude the palm branch that the angel handed to Mary before her death, the throne upon which she sat, and the torches and lanterns held by her attendants. Rembrandt also deviated from other conventional pictorial representation of the Dormition. In an anonymous fifteenth-century German woodcut of the Dormition (fig. 156), for example, twelve apostles in mourning surround Mary on her deathbed and are identified by name with inscriptions around their haloes.<sup>354</sup> The apostles hold some of the liturgical objects that would have been necessary for the administration of the last sacraments to a dying person, all of which Rembrandt eliminated in his print. These objects include: prayer books, the large crucifix near Andrew at Mary's head, the aspergillum and basin of holy water held by Philip, and a censer held by Matthew. Rembrandt's extraction of the liturgical objects in the German woodcut, with the exception of the large prayer book in the center foreground, indicates,

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<sup>353</sup> Brom identifies the large female figure that braces herself against Mary's bedpost as Mary Magdalen because, like Mary, the Magdalen is also connected to the spirits in the sky. Brom, "De traditie in Rembrandt's *Dood van Maria*," 114. Schapelman points out that Rembrandt's combination of two separate moments of Mary's death from the *Legenda aurea*—the angel's annunciation of her death and the transportation of the apostles to Mary's bedside—suggests that Rembrandt looked to the legend for inspiration as opposed to solely relying upon visual sources. Schapelman, "The Death of the Virgin, 1639," 163. See also Williams, *Rembrandt's Women*, 165.

<sup>354</sup> Mary is commonly depicted in Dormition scenes on a deathbed placed at a horizontal axis. This orientation of her body descends from an early Byzantine pictorial tradition in which the body signifies the mensa. Askew, *Caravaggio's Death of the Virgin*, 122.



therefore, that he based his conception of the Dormition only loosely upon the apocryphal tradition and conventional images of Mary's death.

Rembrandt modified not only the types of objects he represented in the *Death of the Virgin*, but also the narrative roles of the central figures. In the German woodcut, for example, Peter presides over Mary's death by holding a prayer book and reaching out toward her body, placing him closer to her than any other apostle.<sup>355</sup> Peter wears the clothing of a priest to distinguish him from the other apostles in many Dormition images, such as Hugo van der Goes's painting, the *Death of the Virgin*, ca. 1480 (fig. 157). The role of a priest logically suits Peter, the leading apostle, because a priest functions in Catholic dying rituals as an essential representative of the Church to perform the last sacraments and requiem mass at the moment of death. While Rembrandt depicts a prominent priestly figure to the left of Mary's bed, his print departs from pictorial convention by the figure's distance from Mary's body, his enclosed pose, and his overly gaudy clothing, which together preclude him from being identified as Peter. Rembrandt further rejected the Dormition's pictorial tradition by placing closest to Mary the doctor—the only figure that comes into direct physical contact with her—and not a figure that can reasonably be identified as an apostle.

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<sup>355</sup> The *Legenda aurea* states, "Peter stood at the head of the bed, John at the foot, the other apostles ranged themselves at the sides. . . ." Jacobus de Voragine, "The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary," in *The Golden Legend: Readings on the Saints*, 90-91. The priest at Mary's deathbed in Dormition scenes derives from the *transitus* text by Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite that appears in his *Divine Names* of ca. 500. On Peter presiding at the head of Mary's deathbed and her bier in literary sources, see Askew, *Caravaggio's Death of the Virgin*, 29, 36-38.

Unlike Rembrandt's print, seventeenth-century depictions of the Dormition, though few in number, maintain the dependence upon a formulaic depiction of the theme we observe in the German woodcut. In the popular and richly illustrated Jesuit devotional manual, *Officium Beatae Mariae Virginis* (Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary), published in 1652 in Antwerp, for example, the book's printmakers, Theodor Galle and Carel de Mallery, represent Mary in repose on her canopied deathbed surrounded by the twelve apostles (fig. 158).<sup>356</sup> The scene closely resembles the earlier engraving by Jan Sadeler I after a drawing by Maarten de Vos, the *Death of the Virgin* (fig. 159), 1576. As in Sadeler's print, a hooded male in the Jesuit manual's illustration, probably Thomas, enters at the left. According to the *Legenda aurea*, Thomas did not arrive at the scene until after Mary's corporeal and spiritual Assumption, and did not believe that she was fully assumed until her girdle suddenly fell into his hands.<sup>357</sup> The other apostles in *Officium Beatae Mariae Virginis*, like those in the anonymous fifteenth-century German print, hold devotional objects for the administration of the last sacraments, including a prominent liturgical cross, open prayer books, an aspergillum for sprinkling holy water, and a long burning taper.

The recurring motifs in Dormition images function as readily identifiable signs that enable the viewer to visually engage with a Dormition image as a devotional object as well as a work of art. Rembrandt omits most of these motifs from

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<sup>356</sup> On the *Officium Beatae Mariae Virginis*, see Dirk Imhof, *De Boekillustraties ten tijde van de Moretussen* (Antwerp: Museum Plantin-Moretus, 1996), 98-99; *Officium Beatae Mariae Virginis, Nuper reformatum, & Pii V. Pontificis Maximi iussu editum: Ad instar Breviarii Romani sub Urbano VIII. recogniti*, (Antverpiae [Antwerp]: Ex Officina Plantiniana Balthasar Moreti, 1652).

<sup>357</sup> De Voragine, *The Golden Legend: Readings on the Saints*, 82.

his print, which underscores his unprecedented iconographic treatment of the theme. Rembrandt includes only one traditional motif in his print: an open prayer book read by a seated male figure in a turban and an exotic cape holds his reading glasses in his left hand.<sup>358</sup> Large books like this one are common in religious imagery, including that by Rembrandt; thus the motif does not make a strong case for a relationship between the print and its pictorial tradition.<sup>359</sup>

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<sup>358</sup> Ariès points out that the reader with spectacles has been a common pictorial motif in Dormition imagery since the end of the Middle Ages. Philippe Ariès, *The Hour of Our Death*, trans. Helen Weaver (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 141.

<sup>359</sup> Scholars are generally in agreement that large books depicted in biblical images represent the Bible. On this motif, refer to Christopher White, *Rembrandt as an Etcher: A Study of the Artist at Work*, 44, 46. The chair upon which the reader sits in Rembrandt's *the Death of the Virgin* is a common piece of Netherlandish furniture that was traditionally designated as a "seat of honor" for special persons, which supports the identification of the large book that he reads as the Bible. Baarsen, *Dutch Furniture, 1600-1800*, 28. Boon argues that Rembrandt's reader symbolizes Jewish rites that were performed in the artist's neighborhood in Amsterdam because of the figure's resemblance to figures in Old Testament imagery. Welzel identifies the figure as one who sanctifies the event. White interprets the figure as a symbol of the Catholic Church. Boon, *Rembrandt: The Complete Etchings*, n.p; Welzel, "The Death of the Virgin," 203-5; White, *Rembrandt as an Etcher: A Study of the Artist at Work*, 45-46. According to Ackley, the figure may be understood as a participant in the religious rites led by the priestly figure and the staff bearer to his right; he may also be a figure recording the event with whom the viewer is meant to identify by virtue of his back turned toward the picture plane. Clifford S. Ackley, *Rembrandt's Journey: Painter, Draftsman, Etcher*, 138. Ronald Bernier unconvincingly argues that Rembrandt's print suggests the period of Mary's transition from her mortal to spiritual life. According to Bernier, Rembrandt omitted the palm branch in his print symbolic of Mary's imminent death in the apocryphal legends because his composition captures the moment after the announcement of Mary's death when her temporal death begins. But, the palm branch was present throughout the episodes of the Dormition's narrative from the announcement through her burial. If the artist relied upon the narrative for this iconographic element of his image as Bernier suggests he did, the author's explanation for the absence of the palm branch lacks substantiation. Also, Bernier claims that Mary does not hold the burning candle of extreme unction that is typically depicted in scenes of her death because the image

The subsequent pages of the *Officium Beatae Mariae Virginis* illustrate the final stages of Mary's Assumption, some of which Rembrandt alludes to in his print. In the image immediately following Mary's death, the scene of her burial procession depicts Mary's body emanating rays of light, signifying the continued unification of her body and soul (fig. 160). Mary's body in *Officium Beatae Mariae Virginis* during and after her death retains its distinct corporeality, unlike Rembrandt's ephemeral body that loses its corporeality while still in the death chamber. An image of Mary's Assumption (fig. 161) follows the burial scene in the *Officium Beatae Mariae Virginis* wherein angels and winged putti carry Mary upward on a large cloud, which shares similarities with the celestial apparition that hovers over Mary's bed in Rembrandt's print. By alluding to the separate events of Mary's death, burial, and Assumption in one composition, Rembrandt effectively captures the orthodox Roman Catholic emphasis on Mary's corporeal *and* spiritual Assumption, which in turn validates her purity and underscores the Church's primary posthumous role for Mary as the Queen of Heaven.<sup>360</sup> At the same time, Rembrandt's omission and modification of figures and objects from the New Testament Apocrypha and the theme's pictorial precedents undermine the Roman Catholic view of Mary's death.

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depicts the precise moment immediately *after* Mary's death and just *before* she is given the candle. This hypothesis is unlikely, however, because candles used in dying rituals before and after the Reformation were given to the dying person before death for them to hold upright during the administration of the last sacrament. A dead person, of course, would not be able to hold a candle upright. Ronald R. Bernier, "The Economy of Salvation: Narrative and Liminality in Rembrandt's *Death of the Virgin*," 181.

<sup>360</sup> In his study of Marian doctrine and beliefs, Pelikan notes that Mary's Dormition implies her Assumption and consequently her role as Queen of Heaven. Pelikan, *Mary Through the Centuries: Her Place in the History of Culture*, 208.

While Mary's elevated status in the *Death of the Virgin* subscribes to Catholic doctrine regarding her holiness, Rembrandt de-Catholicizes the prescribed pictorial approach to Mary's Dormition in two fundamental ways. First, and most importantly, the male figures in the scene do not represent the twelve apostles. The males Rembrandt scattered throughout his composition share no affinity to one another in their appearance, dress, or comportment. Neither the long-haired male wearing a hat in the far left of the composition, barely visible behind the priestly figure, nor another male in the far right, crouching in the shadow of the curtain, plays a significant role in the composition.

Second, Rembrandt manipulates or omits the Dormition's standard iconographic motifs. The tall knobby staff held by the tonsured servant in the left foreground does not resemble any of the Christian processional crosses mounted with a crucifix that appear in extant prints and paintings of the Dormition, such as in the *Officium Beatae Mariae Virginis*. Nor does Rembrandt render the staff to conform to the design of a typical crosier, such as the one represented in a portrait of Bishop Gijsbert Masius (1546-1614) of 's-Hertogenbosch featured in a book by the predicant Gerardus Livius published in 1612 in Nijmegen (fig. 162).<sup>361</sup> Moreover, the tall

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<sup>361</sup> The Nijmegen minister Gerardus Livius (Gerard Lievens) chastised Gijsbert Masius, the bishop of the cathedral of St. Janskerk in Den Bosch, in two pamphlets for devoting himself equally to both Christ and Mary. Masius commissioned portraits of himself in stained glass windows that he installed in two churches: St. Pieterskerk and Kloosterskerk, both in Den Bosch. The windows depict Masius kneeling between an image of Christ bleeding on the cross on the left and Mary spewing milk from her breast on the right. Text incorporated in the composition indicates that Masius's soul was thirsty and that he could not decide from which source he most wanted to drink. Gerardus Livius, *Bericht van de behoorlijcke ende*

priestly figure beside the staff bearer in Rembrandt's print wears vestments that are markedly different from the customary surplice and stole of a Dutch priest or the two-point miter of a bishop, such as those in Bishop Masius's portrait.<sup>362</sup> The priestly figure's liturgical garments also differ from those worn by Saint Willibrord, the first bishop of Utrecht, featured in an etching by Jan Goeree of the church ruins of the Chapel of Our Lady of Need (fig. 163) in Jacob van Royen's book, *Antiquitates Belgicae of Nederlandsche Oudtheden*, published in 1700 in Amsterdam.<sup>363</sup>

Rembrandt's peculiar design of the priestly figure's surplice and the odd curvature and decoration of his quasi-mitre, like the strange shape of the tall knobby staff, are distortions of typical seventeenth-century Roman Catholic liturgical objects. While the priestly figure's exotic garments may resemble the style of clothing worn by those in Rembrandt's Old Testament narratives, the staff and hat under discussion seem to detach the figures from their traditional, sacred role. The artist's omission or distortion of Catholic signs and symbols therefore suggests that the print would not

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*onbehoorlijcke eere der ghelucksaligher Maghet Maria. Weerde moeder onses Heeren Iesu Christi* (Nieumegen [Nijmegen]: Aernt Corneliszoon, 1612); Gerardus Livius, *Gheschilderde onwetenheyd Gisberti Masii, bisschops tot Sertogenbosch* (Gorinchem: Adriaen Helmichsz, 1614); Schwartz and Bok, *Pieter Saenredam: The Painter and His Time*, 84.

<sup>362</sup> Bevers, Gilboa, and Russell identify this figure as Peter. Bevers adds that his "orientalising fantasy costume" situates him within the ancient Jewish Middle East, yet these garments and accessories are not similar enough to those worn by Rembrandt's Jewish biblical figures to warrant this contention. Holm Bevers, "Rembrandt as an Etcher," in *Rembrandt: The Master and His Workshop, Drawings and Etchings*, 204; Anat Gilboa, *Images of the Feminine in Rembrandt's Work*, 59; Russell, *Eva/Ave: Woman in Renaissance and Baroque Prints*, 91.

<sup>363</sup> Van Royen, *Antiquitates Belgicae of Nederlandsche Oudtheden*, 189. On the site at Heiloo, see Frijhoff and Spies, *1650: Hard-Won Unity*, 28; Verheggen, *Beelden voor Passie en Hartstocht: Bid- en devotieprenten in de Noordelijke Nederlanden, 17de en 18de eeuw*, 252.

have appealed to, and could perhaps have even offended, orthodox Catholic audiences. Rembrandt's print fundamentally disregards the *Legenda aurea* Dormition narrative and its pictorial representation, forcing the viewer to consider other influences for the artist's unusual iconographic modifications.

### **Dying Rituals in the Seventeenth-Century Republic**

Seventeenth-century society mainly depended on the *ars moriendi* (art of dying) illustrated manuals for guidance in a proper Christian death. The *ars moriendi*, which provided the model for most images of the Dormition, offers another possible literary source to which Rembrandt may have turned. The *ars moriendi* were one of the most popular literary genres and subjects for printmakers in the fifteenth century, which the Jesuits revived by publishing 150 books on the subject between 1540 and 1700.<sup>364</sup> The manual's popularity coincided with shifting practices in death and dying rituals among both Catholics and Protestants in the post-Reformation period. The renewed interest in the *ars moriendi* by the time of Rembrandt's print could have

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<sup>364</sup> Robert Bellarmine, *Robert Bellarmine: Spiritual Writings*, trans. John Patrick Donnelly S. J., and Roland J. Teske, S. J., eds. (New York and Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1989), 36. The Jesuit order in Rome revived this genre. As part of this movement, Vincenzo Carraffa developed a new foundation in Rome in 1648 called the Confraternity of the Bona Mors at the Gesù. The organization practiced devotions and exercises to ensure their good death. On the Jesuit contribution to the *ars moriendi* literary theme, refer to Susan C. Karant-Nunn, *The Reformation of Ritual: An Interpretation of Early Modern Germany* (London and New York: Routledge, 1997), 139; Irving Lavin, "Bernini's Death," *The Art Bulletin* 54, no. 2 (1972): 163-64; Mary Catharine O'Connor, *The Art of Dying Well: The Development of the Ars Moriendi* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1942); Carlos Sommervogel and Augustin de Backer, *Bibliothèque de la Compagnie de Jésus* (Brussels and Paris: Oscar Schepens and Alphose Picard, 1890-1932).

served as an impetus for him to refashion the subject of Mary's death for his audience.

The central theme of the *ars moriendi* manuals focuses on the governance of the soul during life and after death, expressing the Roman Catholic theological meaning of Mary's Dormition and images of the apocryphal legend. Rembrandt's emphasis on Mary's soul, as opposed to a faithful transcription of the events of her death, point to his concern with contemporary attitudes toward the soul, such as in the *ars moriendi*, rather than with an archaizing depiction of the Dormition. To achieve a proper death and salvation for the soul, the *ars moriendi* emphasize for their Catholic readership the critical nature of the last sacraments of baptism, confession with contrition, communion, and extreme unction to be administered at the very end of one's life. At the moment of death, according to the *ars moriendi* text and the typical illustrations in the manuals, the dying person must meditate upon images of both Christ and Mary while receiving extreme unction in order to avoid the temptations of the devil and his minions.<sup>365</sup>

One of the most popular of the *ars moriendi* in the seventeenth century, *De arte bene moriendi* (The Art of Dying Well) by the Italian Jesuit Cardinal, Roberto Bellarmine, was reprinted in the remarkable number of fifty-six editions that were translated into ten different languages, including Dutch.<sup>366</sup> John Patrick Donnelly posits that Bellarmine wrote the book for a wide audience of Christians, not just

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<sup>365</sup> Irving Lavin, "Bernini's Death," 163.

<sup>366</sup> Carlos Sommervogel and Augustin de Backer, *Bibliothèque de la Compagnie de Jésus* (Brussels and Paris: Oscar Schepens and Alphose Picard, 1890-1932), *passim*.



Catholics, clerics, and “men of affairs.”<sup>367</sup> Bellarmine’s book would have been available to Rembrandt in its 1626 edition published by Willem Jansz Blaeu, the well-known Catholic publisher and bookseller in Amsterdam where the artist lived at the time he etched the *Death of the Virgin*.<sup>368</sup> Bellarmine’s text presents a new approach to the *ars moriendi* tradition in that it focuses on the living by emphasizing the need to prepare for death during the entire course of one’s life. At the beginning of the first chapter in an English translation of the book, Bellarmine summarizes the thrust of his perspective on death in which he writes, “true then, & general is this principle *he who liveth wel, doth dye well*,” which proposes that an individual’s actions up to the moment of death should be in accord with prescribed modes of moral, ethical, and pious behavior.<sup>369</sup> Bellarmine also stresses the significance of Mary in the *ars moriendi* tradition, writing “in awaiting for our final judgment, we need to beseech friends of the Advocate, especially the Virgin (Mother of the Advocate) and angels and saints.”<sup>370</sup> Bellarmine’s book, as an example of the *ars moriendi*, provides clues to understand Rembrandt’s audience for the *Death of the Virgin* by pinpointing his

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<sup>367</sup> Bellarmine, *Robert Bellarmine: Spiritual Writings*, 23, 25.

<sup>368</sup> Bellarmine published the Amsterdam edition of the book in Latin, which Rembrandt may or may not have been able to read. While he did attend Latin school in Leiden before he began his apprenticeship as an artist, thus allowing for the possibility that he could read at least some Latin, he could have certainly been familiar with the book’s two detailed illustrations. Roberti S. R. E. Card. Bellarmini, *De arte bene moriendi. Libri dvo.* (Coloniae Agrippinae [Amsterdam]: Cornelium ab Egmond [Willem Jansz Blaeu], 1626).

<sup>369</sup> Roberto Bellarmine, *The art of dying well. Devided into two books*, trans. Edward Coffin (Saint-Omer, France: English College Press, 1622), 4.

<sup>370</sup> Bellarmine, *Robert Bellarmine: Spiritual Writings*, 330.

deviations from literary and pictorial precedents as well as presenting contemporary dying rituals.

Bellarmino's book addresses all of the components of a proper death, which Catholics were expected to follow during dying rituals. Separated into two volumes, the first part of Bellarmine's manual lists the ways in which one should conduct one's life when healthy by practicing the sacraments, doing good works and living according to theological and moral virtues.<sup>371</sup> The second part outlines the measures one must take when ill and close to death in order to fully prepare for an ideal passage to heaven. Bellarmine discusses the necessity of making a last will and testament, paying off debt, appealing to the saints, and warding off the devil through the sacraments of baptism, confession with contrition, communion, and extreme unction, or the anointing of the sick. Bellarmine underscored his central message in the two illustrations that mark the beginning of each section of the book's Dutch edition: salvation for the soul can only be achieved by performing good works in life (fig. 164), and receiving the sacraments at the time of death (fig. 165).<sup>372</sup> In the woodcut illustrating the second half of the book, a priest administers the final sacraments to a male figure lying in a canopied bed in the company of mourners, burning tapers, two crucifixes, and other objects. Bellarmine discusses extreme unction, the last sacrament, in several chapters of the book, emphasizing that it should be administered with holy oil to the five parts of the human body that are gateways to the senses, and that it must be performed before death with faithful friends to mourn with prayers and

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<sup>371</sup> Lavin, "Bernini's Death," 164.

<sup>372</sup> Ibid.

tears at the deathbed.<sup>373</sup> Rembrandt's print, like Bellarmine's woodcut, places standing and kneeling figures around the canopied bed in a darkened interior space in a scene that clearly depicts a dying ritual, albeit one without the recognizable Catholic liturgical objects for extreme unction we find in the manual.

Rembrandt also depicts the outwardly expressive piety and grief for the dying that Catholics believed aided in salvation at the time of death, as illustrated in Bellarmine's *ars moriendi* manual. Rembrandt filled his composition with weeping women who hold handkerchiefs to their faces, a large prayer book, and male figures dressed in the guise of clerics—all of which would have been required at an ideal Catholic death scene.<sup>374</sup> Before the Reformation, such aspects of dying rituals were an expected component of life for Christians, which they rehearsed and perfected with the aid of the *ars moriendi* throughout their lives and treated as a public event at the time of death.<sup>375</sup> Pre-Reformation Christian death and burial rituals in the Netherlands involved colorful, traditional customs of bell ringing and elaborate displays of

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<sup>373</sup> Bellarmine introduces the subject of extreme unction in chapter sixteen—the last chapter of the first part of his book. He states that the sacrament should be postponed as long as possible because administering it might frighten the dying person. Since the sacrament can also restore one's health, however, it should be performed while the dying person remains conscious. Bellarmine, *Robert Bellarmine: Spiritual Writings*, 303, 366.

<sup>374</sup> On handkerchiefs as a sign of sorrow, see Stephanie S. Dickey, "'Met een wenende ziel . . . doch droge ogen': Women Holding Handkerchiefs in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Portraits," *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 46 (1995): 333-67.

<sup>375</sup> On dying as a dramatic artistic form of expression in the Middle Ages, see Susan C. Karant-Nunn, *The Reformation of Ritual: An Interpretation of Early Modern Germany*, 139.

crosses, burning candles, incense, and floral wreaths.<sup>376</sup> The dying person's clergy, family, friends, and neighbors gathered to bathe the individual and recite prayers of Our Father, the Ave Maria, and the Creed in the death chamber.<sup>377</sup> Family members, wailing women, neighbors, and clerics were expected to stay with the dying person to grieve and express sorrow.<sup>378</sup> While a priest administered the last sacraments, the dying person positioned his or her hands in the form of a cross, or held a crucifix in the right hand. More often a priest would give the person a candle to hold in both hands during extreme unction.<sup>379</sup> After the completion of the last sacraments, nuns

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<sup>376</sup> Van Deursen, *Plain Lives in a Golden Age: Popular Culture, Religion and Society in Seventeenth-Century Holland*, 244; J. J. Woldendorp, "Flitsen uit de kerkelijke geschiedenis van Zoetermeer-Zeegwaart na de reformatie," *Jaarboekje voor geschiedenis en oudheidkunde van Leiden en omstreken* (1956): 90. On dying rituals in the Netherlands, see also Renée Johanna Hirsch, *Doodenritueel in de Nederlanden vóór 1700* (Amsterdam: A. H. Kruijdt, 1921); Ruud Spruit, *De Dood onder ogen: een cultuurgeschiedenis van steven, begraven, cremereen, en rouw* (Houten: De Haan, 1986).

<sup>377</sup> H. L. Kok, *De geschiedenis van de laatste eer in Nederland* (Lochem: N. V. Uitgeversmaatschappij De Tijdstroom, 1970), 149; Craig M. Koslofsky, *The Reformation of the Dead: Death and Ritual in Early Modern Germany, 1450-1700* (London and New York: MacMillan Press and St. Martin's Press, 2000), 22-23.

<sup>378</sup> The public nature of death before the Reformation extended after the time of one's death with bell ringing to signal the administration of extreme unction and the official death of a community member. Christians were buried in the floors of churches, which, according to Karant-Nunn, intimately connected the living with the dead. Karant-Nunn, *The Reformation of Ritual: An Interpretation of Early Modern Germany*, 123.

<sup>379</sup> For a useful source on Dutch dying rituals in the early modern period, particularly funerary practices, see Hirsch, *Doodenritueel in de Nederlanden vóór 1700*, 11. On the history of death, burial and funerary traditions, see Ariès, *The Hour of Our Death*; Michel Vovelle, *Mourir autrefois: attitudes collectives devant la mort aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles* (Paris: Gallimard, 1974).

prayed with the dying individual, and in the final moments of death, the attendants in the death chamber fell to their knees in prayer.<sup>380</sup>

Despite the fact that the Calvinists abolished traditional dying rituals by the time Rembrandt etched his print, certain customs persisted. For example, a traveling priest, missionary, or *beguines* (spiritual laywomen) could attend a dying Catholic.<sup>381</sup> Catholics performed funerals in the privacy of the home and they buried their deceased in unconsecrated ground away from cemeteries and churches, which the Reformed reserved exclusively for themselves.<sup>382</sup> In Rembrandt's print, the noticeable grieving of the female figures, their handkerchiefs, and the males in the likeness of Catholic clerics, present the scene as an image consonant with contemporary Catholic dying rituals.

Rembrandt's *Death of the Virgin*, however, lacks the key ingredient necessary for it to function as a traditional Catholic-sanctioned scene of death: the liturgical objects, authentic clerics, and cloth related to the last sacrament of extreme unction. The administration of extreme unction requires a priest dressed in a surplice and stole to sprinkle or daub with his thumb holy water or oil on the dying person's body parts, such as the eyes, ears, and mouth, as depicted in a 1673 woodcut in Josse

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<sup>380</sup> Koslofsky, *The Reformation of the Dead: Death and Ritual in Early Modern Germany, 1450-1700*, 22-23.

<sup>381</sup> After the Synod of Schiedam in 1631, Reformers reportedly complained that the beguines failed to hide themselves adequately in public, churches, church courts, and while administering the last sacraments to the dying. Kok, *De geschiedenis van de laatste eer in Nederland*, 165.

<sup>382</sup> *Ibid.*, 150.

Andries's Jesuit meditations on Mary (fig. 166).<sup>383</sup> In Roman Catholic theology, the sacrament has the potential to restore bodily health and absolve venial sins in a critical effort to achieve salvation for the dying person before death.<sup>384</sup>

During extreme unction, the dying person typically grips a burning taper and the death chamber is decorated with a crucifix—objects recognized as “channels of divinity.”<sup>385</sup> Most traditional *ars moriendi* death scenes include the taper, as in the 1652 Jesuit manual, *Officium Beatae Mariae Virginis*, and Theodor Galle's late sixteenth-century engraving depicting extreme unction after Marten van Heemskerck (fig. 167). The candle also appears in nearly all images of the Dormition and Assumption, such as in Hieronymus Wierix's engraving (fig. 168) for Hieronymus Nadal's popular 1594 Jesuit manual, *Adnotationes et meditationes in Evangelia* (Notes and Meditations on the Gospels).<sup>386</sup> The candle, one of the standard Catholic liturgical objects Rembrandt omitted from his print, signified Mary's purification, eternal light in worldly darkness, and the ultimate triumph over death.<sup>387</sup> Following

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<sup>383</sup> Josse Andries, *Heylighe weke ter eeren van de Alderheylighste Maeghet ende Moeder Godts Maria* (Antwerp: Michiel Cnobbaert, 1673).

<sup>384</sup> Susan Karant-Nunn remarks that the priest's sacred surplice and stole are essential components of his liturgical vestments that were to be worn while administering the last sacraments. The garments distinguish the priest from other clerics and attendants in the death chamber, thus imbuing him with unique powers. Karant-Nunn, *The Reformation of Ritual: An Interpretation of Early Modern Germany*, 140.

<sup>385</sup> Ibid., 143.

<sup>386</sup> Hieronymus Nadal, *Adnotationes et meditationes in Evangelia* (Antuerpiae [Antwerp]: Martinus Nutius, 1594).

<sup>387</sup> Karant-Nunn, *The Reformation of Ritual: An Interpretation of Early Modern Germany*, 138, 143; Zsuzsa Urbach, "Notes on Bruegel's Archaism: His Relation to Early Netherlandish Painting and Other Sources," *Acta Historiae Artium* 24 (1978): 244. See also Askew, *Caravaggio's Death of the Virgin*, 162 n. 17; Susan

extreme unction, a cleric wipes the oil off the dying person's body with a towel or wool cloth, which might be the white material in Rembrandt's print that the balding figure at Mary's head holds to her face. That the cloth in the image signifies the administration of extreme unction cannot be verified, however, because Rembrandt includes no other liturgical objects that are necessary to fully perform the sacrament. The ambiguity with which viewers are left regarding the iconography of the cloth, therefore, further removes Rembrandt's print from the context of the Dormition's pictorial representation as well as from contemporary Catholic dying rituals in the *ars moriendi*.<sup>388</sup>

While Rembrandt's print cannot be considered Catholic in its iconography, it does not fit with a Protestant theological paradigm either. Protestant viewers of Rembrandt's *Death of the Virgin*, especially Calvinists, would have abhorred certain figures associated with Catholic dying rituals, such as the priestly figure, tonsured servant, and the mourning women. Rembrandt's Protestant audience could have appreciated, for example, the lack of a crucifix atop the knobby staff, but the recognizable apocryphal subject of Mary's death and the Catholicized death rituals

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Koslow, "The Impact of Hugo van der Goes's Mental Illness and Late-Medieval Religious Attitudes on the *Death of the Virgin*," in *Healing and History: Essays for George Rosen*, ed. Charles F. Rosenberg (Kent, United Kingdom: William Dawson, 1979), 37.

<sup>388</sup> On dying rituals and their parallel to images of the Dormition, see Ariès, *The Hour of Our Death*, 108-9, 141.

taking place in the scene had no place in Protestant liturgy, devotion, or theological doctrine.<sup>389</sup>

In Reformed communities by the seventeenth century, the time of death focused not on the hope of salvation channeled through emotional angst and pleas for intercession from the saints, but on total submission to God's will in all things, including a peaceful acceptance of death.<sup>390</sup> Calvinists perceived death as a private, intimate event, not the relatively elaborate and public affair that Catholics practiced. Dutch Calvinist rituals abided by strict rules of emotional restraint while dying or mourning, and they removed any ostentatious display of material objects of devotion to the saints at the deathbed. Furthermore, Calvinists forbade mourners from openly grieving with the dying person.<sup>391</sup> Mourners could not kneel beside a deathbed or

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<sup>389</sup> Urbach posits that because Protestants abolished the use of crosses for individual worship, they would appreciate Rembrandt's odd-shaped staff since it denies an affinity with Catholic liturgical crosses. Urbach, "Notes on Bruegel's Archaism: His Relation to Early Netherlandish Painting and Other Sources," 244. One of the best resources on seventeenth-century Lutheran dying and death rituals is Koslofsky, *The Reformation of the Dead: Death and Ritual in Early Modern Germany, 1450-1700*, 38.

<sup>390</sup> Whaley notes that Lutherans and Calvinists curtailed excessive spending on burials in the sixteenth century as a means to focus on the spiritual, not material, significance of the event. Karant-Nunn, *The Reformation of Ritual: An Interpretation of Early Modern Germany*, 122, 125; Joachim Whaley, ed., *Mirrors of Mortality: Studies in the Social History of Death*, *The Social History of Human Experience* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1981), 6. See also Arthur E. Imhof, *Ars moriendi. Die kunst des sterbens einst und heute* (Vienna: Böhlau, 1991); Koslofsky, *The Reformation of the Dead: Death and Ritual in Early Modern Germany, 1450-1700*; Ursula Rohner-Baumberger von Rebstein, *Das Begräbniswesen im Calvinistischen Genf* (Basel: Stehlin, 1975), 11-16.

<sup>391</sup> Wailing women were commonly found at the bedside of a dying Christian before the Reformation, but they were not permitted to participate in death rituals in the post-Reformation period. In this vein, funerals were also largely discontinued in Calvinist, Reformed communities. Regarding the severe emotional self-discipline in



during funerals, and could not recite prayers for the dead, which Reformers criticized as “popish.”<sup>392</sup> Calvinists also banned the practice of burning candles at the deathbed, on biers, and during funerals, as well as the use of incense, holy water, and crosses.<sup>393</sup> Rembrandt’s print omits liturgical objects and signs of the Roman Catholic sacrament of extreme unction, yet the inclusion of weeping women in the image contradicted Protestant theology and could have offended orthodox viewers.

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Calvinist dying rituals in post-Reformation Germany, which were relatively similar to those practiced in the northern Netherlands, Karant-Nunn remarks, “To grieve immoderately exposed a human will that struggled against the divine plan.” Lutherans abolished all former Catholic rituals of prayer, requiem mass and indulgences for the dead as well as churchyard burial so as to physically and psychologically separate the living from the dead in accordance with Protestant theological doctrine. Family members and a pastor could accompany a dying person at the deathbed, and limited agnostic prayers for the dead were acceptable. The dying person was otherwise expected to die gently and quietly, as if falling asleep. Karant-Nunn, *The Reformation of Ritual: An Interpretation of Early Modern Germany*, 125. Luther instructed his followers not to mourn the dead excessively because he perceived the deceased body as merely a corpse that should be forgotten. Karant-Nunn states that the dead, according to Luther, slept in their “little beds of rest” (*ruhebettlein*) while waiting for the end of the world. For Lutherans, the corpse was detritus, without a soul, and thus did not require prayer. Karant-Nunn, *The Reformation of Ritual: An Interpretation of Early Modern Germany*, 185.

<sup>392</sup> Van Deursen cites rare exceptions to the standard Dutch mourning practices in women, for example, who reportedly kneeled during a burial service in 1625 in Enkhuizen, and women in Stolwijk who prayed at graves. He stipulates, however, that Dutch Protestants were reluctant as a whole to relinquish their Catholic traditions and that the Reformed still practiced some customs, such as prayers for the dead. He also notes that some old Catholic altars were still kept on display in Reformed churches. The author concludes that the Catholic past was still deeply embedded in seventeenth-century Dutch Protestant life stating, “Inside and outside the church, remnants of the old were long maintained.” Van Deursen, *Plain Lives in a Golden Age: Popular Culture, Religion and Society in Seventeenth-Century Holland*, 242, 246-47. See also Karant-Nunn, *The Reformation of Ritual: An Interpretation of Early Modern Germany*, 185.

<sup>393</sup> Calvinists were also not allowed to ring bells in a burial processional. Karant-Nunn, *The Reformation of Ritual: An Interpretation of Early Modern Germany*, 185.

Rembrandt's print also depicts male figures, perhaps Catholic clerics wearing ornate vestments who conceivably would be present in a death chamber to administer extreme unction, which Calvinists also forbade in dying rituals.<sup>394</sup> A dying Calvinist ideally left the world of the living with more independence and self-assurance than Catholics. The Dutch Calvinist Johannes Fontanus, for example, reportedly moistened the fingertips of his right hand and closed his own eyes at the time of his death.<sup>395</sup> The iconography of Rembrandt's the *Death of the Virgin*, therefore, cannot be categorized as Catholic or Protestant, nor can it function purely as a devotional print or a didactic image of seventeenth-century dying rituals. Most scholars unfairly disregard Rembrandt's modifications to the liturgical meaning of the print as mere anomalies that reflect the artist's eccentricities, and attribute his choice of subject to artistic influences.

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<sup>394</sup> Regardless of whether the print's viewer interprets the male figures as Roman Catholic clerics or ancient Jewish priests, a Protestant would not have practiced the dying rituals associated with either faith. Lutherans in Germany retained pastors in dying rituals for the purpose of administering communion to the dying person, but extreme unction was eliminated from the cleric's responsibilities. Ibid., 124-25, 168, 185. On Lutheran death and burial practices in Germany, see Whaley, ed., *Mirrors of Mortality: Studies in the Social History of Death*, 6. In his thorough study of post-Reformation death rituals in England, Llewellyn notes that certain holdovers from Catholic pre-Reformation practices continued, such as the use of the clergy's chasuble, but that Protestants led dying rituals, in general, without much professional guidance. As in Lutheran Germany, the focus at the time of death in England was on the living with what Llewellyn discusses as didactic Protestant devotional literature emphasizing the notion of regeneration, tranquility, and preparation for the "good death." Nigel Llewellyn, *The Art of Death: Visual Culture in the English Death Ritual, c. 1500-c. 1800* (London: Reaktion Books in association with the Victoria and Albert Museum, 1991), 28, 79, 81.

<sup>395</sup> Kok, *De geschiedenis van de laatste eer in Nederland*, 150.

## Pictorial Precedents to Rembrandt's the *Death of the Virgin*

In his seminal study of Rembrandt's etchings, Christopher White proclaimed the *Death of the Virgin* the artist's "magnum opus."<sup>396</sup> Yet despite White's assessment, Rembrandt's print has received only marginal attention from other scholars who have consistently relied, unconvincingly, on three artistic precedents to explain Rembrandt's conception of Mary's death. First, several speculate that Rembrandt's inspiration derived from the anticipation of his mother's death in 1640 and the death of his wife, Saskia, who was bedridden due to pregnancy and illness from 1635 until she died in 1642. These scholars argue that the illness and death of Rembrandt's mother and wife led to his general preoccupation or fascination with death that he manifested in works, such as *Death Appearing to a Wedded Couple* (fig. 169), 1639, which he etched in the same year as the *Death of the Virgin*.<sup>397</sup>

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<sup>396</sup> White, *Rembrandt as an Etcher: A Study of the Artist at Work*, 44.

<sup>397</sup> Filedt Kok, *Rembrandt. Etchings and Drawings in the Rembrandt House*, 87; Münz, *A Critical Catalogue of Rembrandt's Etchings and the Etchings of His School Formerly Attributed to the Master with an Essay on Rembrandt's Technique and Documentary Sources*, 28; Hans-Martin Rotermund, *Rembrandt's Drawings and Etchings for the Bible*, 7. Numerous scholars have speculated that Rembrandt's sketches of Saskia had an intense emotional impact on the artist while he etched the *Death of the Virgin*. Christopher White and Julia Lloyd Williams, however, argue that Mary does not appear as deathly ill as Saskia, so his wife could only have served Rembrandt as a model as opposed to inspiration for his depiction of Mary. Bevers, "Rembrandt as an Etcher," 204; Münz, *A Critical Catalogue of Rembrandt's Etchings and the Etchings of His School Formerly Attributed to the Master with an Essay on Rembrandt's Technique and Documentary Sources*, 28; Rotermund, *Rembrandt's Drawings and Etchings for the Bible*, 7; White, *Rembrandt as an Etcher: A Study of the Artist at Work*, 45; Williams, *Rembrandt's Women*, 165; Zdanowicz, "Etchings by Rembrandt (cat. nos. 99-122)," 400. Akihiro Ozaki posits that images of Saskia in bed suggest an overall preoccupation with melancholia, which the artist may have experienced, yet even this interpretation does not explain Rembrandt's choice of this specific subject nor his deviations from the iconography. Akihiro Ozaki,

Rembrandt also produced numerous prints and sketches of Saskia at this time that he quite likely used as models for the figure of Mary in the Dormition, such as the pen and ink drawing *Saskia in Bed* (fig. 170), ca. 1639, and the etched sheet that includes two depictions of Saskia in her bed (fig. 171). Studies of Saskia and other images related to death from this period may certainly have prompted Rembrandt to contemplate the theme and could have informed the pose of Mary's body, but they obviously could not have dictated the print's larger iconographic program of the Dormition.

Other scholars have traced Rembrandt's print to two sixteenth-century pictorial precedents, one a woodcut by Albrecht Dürer, and the other a stained glass window by Dirck Crabeth, of which Rembrandt had certain knowledge. Yet, Rembrandt strays from their dependence upon the administration of extreme unction as the predominant theological message. Although Rembrandt may have been aware of Northern precedents of the Dormition, he consciously deviated from them.

Scholars trace a strong relationship between Rembrandt's print and Albrecht Dürer's woodcut, the *Death of the Virgin* (fig. 172), 1510, from his series, the *Life of the Virgin*, 1502-11. Rembrandt purchased numerous sets of Dürer's series at the Gommer Sprange auction in February 1638, the year before he etched the *Death of*

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"Observations on the Motif of Saskia's Drooping Head in the Drawings by Rembrandt during the 1630s," *Art History* 6 (1984): 73-90, cited in Martin Royalton-Kisch, *Drawings by Rembrandt and his Circle in the British Museum* (London: British Museum Press, 1992), 69.

*the Virgin*.<sup>398</sup> Presumably, Rembrandt studied Dürer's compositions and iconographic conception of Mary's life. Rembrandt evokes several elements from Dürer's print in his own interpretation of the theme, including the grandiose canopied bed, the kneeling staff bearer, the bishop at the left of Mary's bed, and the open passageway at the right.

Christopher White demonstrated that Rembrandt might also have borrowed elements from Dürer's woodcut, the *Birth of the Virgin* (fig. 173), from the same series. The large angel swinging the censer over the interior scene, White suggests, is similar to Rembrandt's angel hovering over Mary's bed with outstretched arms.<sup>399</sup> Rembrandt certainly may have looked to Dürer's the *Birth of the Virgin* for inspiration in designing his celestial apparition. The large angel and scattered putti in the upper right of his composition also recall similar figures in the clouds of Rembrandt's earlier print, *Angel Appearing to the Shepherds* (fig. 174), 1634, and those in Titian's the *Assumption of the Virgin* (fig. 175), 1516-18. In taking into consideration the works depicting angels by Rembrandt and Titian, therefore, the

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<sup>398</sup> The extant Rembrandt documents indicate that the artist purchased nine sets of the series at the Gommer Sprange auction. Van Rijn, Strauss, and Meulen, *The Rembrandt Documents*, 165. White notes that Rembrandt attended the auction in February on two occasions. White, *Rembrandt as an Etcher: A Study of the Artist at Work*, 2nd ed., 45. See also Schapelman, "The Death of the Virgin, 1639," 162; Williams, *Rembrandt's Women*, 165. Haak concluded from Rembrandt's purchase that he must have intended to sell the series as a dealer, which strengthens the possibility that Rembrandt expected his large and highly finished print, the *Death of the Virgin*, to find an eager buying market. Bob Haak, *Rembrandt: His Life, Work and Times*, 161. For a thorough study of Dürer's the *Life of the Virgin* series and its pictorial influences, see Carol L. Troyen, "Dürer's *Life of the Virgin*" (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1979).

<sup>399</sup> White, *Rembrandt as an Etcher: A Study of the Artist at Work*, 2nd ed., 45.

*Death of the Virgin* cannot simply be viewed as an emulation singly of Dürer's woodblock prints.

Scholars also typically associate Rembrandt's print with Dirck Crabeth's stained glass window of Mary's Dormition (fig. 176) in Amsterdam's Oude Kerk, dated 1561-65. The window is most easily studied in the drawing Crabeth made.<sup>400</sup> Scholars have assumed that Rembrandt knew Crabeth's window because he lived in Amsterdam. He probably saw the window on a routine basis because Rembrandt's second son was baptized on July 22, 1638 in the Oude Kerk, and in 1639, the year he etched his print under discussion, he purchased a home located only a short walk from the church.<sup>401</sup>

The precedents by Dürer and Crabeth might have inspired Rembrandt with certain compositional techniques and iconographic motifs. Dürer's kneeling staff bearer and the priestly figure to Mary's left wearing a bishop's mitre appear similarly in Rembrandt's print. Like Dürer, Rembrandt also situates Mary in a canopied bed next to an open doorway at the right.<sup>402</sup> Crabeth's composition may have inspired

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<sup>400</sup> Brom was the first scholar to relate Rembrandt's print to the Oude Kerk windows, but he misattributed them to Pieter Aertsen. Scholars now overwhelmingly agree that Crabeth designed the windows. Brom, "De traditie in Rembrandt's *Dood van Maria*," 116; Schapelman, "The Death of the Virgin, 1639," 162; White, *Rembrandt as an Etcher: A Study of the Artist at Work*, 2nd ed., 45; Williams, *Rembrandt's Women*, 165. For a study of Crabeth's windows in Gouda and Amsterdam, refer to J. Q. van Regteren Altena, "Tekeningen van Dirck Crabeth," *Oud Holland* 55-56 (1938): 107-14.

<sup>401</sup> Previous scholars have not suggested this event as proof of Rembrandt's influence. For documentation of the baptism, refer to Van Rijn, Strauss, and Meulen, *The Rembrandt Documents*, 155.

<sup>402</sup> Northern depictions of the Dormition typically portray Mary in or near canopied beds decorated with a length of drapery called a "curtain sack," which is

Rembrandt's horizontal position of the canopied bed, the figure kneeling in the center foreground who reads from a large book with his back towards the viewer, the voluminous celestial clouds hovering close to the ceiling, and the arrangement of the other figures surrounding Mary.

Studying and paying homage in his work to previous masters, a common seventeenth-century rhetorical practice known as *imitatio*, could have stimulated Rembrandt to produce the *Death of the Virgin* after Dürer and Crabeth as he had previously done with works by Italian masters.<sup>403</sup> In the same year he etched the Dormition, Rembrandt he saw Raphael's *Portrait of Baldassare Castiglione* (fig. 177), ca. 1514-15, which and sketched at an auction in Amsterdam (fig. 178).<sup>404</sup>

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bunched and hangs from the top of the frame where a post ought to appear. The gathered section of cloth on such a bed signifies Mary's womb—the vessel of the Incarnation. Given that the canopy over the bed in Rembrandt's print does not gather together in voluminous bunches in the way that canopies do in the print's pictorial precedents, I will not pursue this line of iconography to interpret the image. On Mary's portrayal with canopied beds, refer to Askew, *Caravaggio's Death of the Virgin*, 114-15, 118; Susan Koslow, "The Curtain-Sack: A Newly Discovered Incarnation Motif in Rogier van der Weyden's *Columba Annunciation*," *Artibus et Historiae* 7, no. 13 (1986): 33.

<sup>403</sup> Rembrandt's attraction to Dürer's woodcut series, according to Bevers, demonstrates the "breadth of his erudition and education." Here, it is worthwhile to note that Rembrandt may have borrowed the subject of Dürer's composition, yet the size of Rembrandt's print (40.9 x 31.5 cm) is considerably larger than Dürer's woodcut (29.5 x 21 cm), which may suggest that Rembrandt simultaneously hoped to pay homage to *and* surpass the work of his Nuremberg predecessor. Bevers, "Rembrandt as an Etcher," 163, 203. See also Filedt Kok, *Rembrandt. Etchings and Drawings in the Rembrandt House*, 87; Zdanowicz, "Etchings by Rembrandt (cat. nos. 99-122)," 400.

<sup>404</sup> Rembrandt sketched Raphael's painting while it was on view during the Lucas van Uffelen auction in Amsterdam in 1639. Alphonso Lopez, an Amsterdam diamond trader who also owned Rembrandt's painting *The Angel and the Prophet Balaam*, 1626, purchased Raphael's painting. John Michael Montias, *Art at Auction in 17th Century Amsterdam* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2003), 28-29;

Again in the same year, he transformed himself into the guise of Castiglione in his etching, *Self-Portrait Leaning on a Stone Sill* (fig. 179). In the following year, Rembrandt painted a self-portrait of his upper body viewed through an arched niche with his right arm propped on a ledge, which scholars posit he based not only on Raphael's painting, but also on Titian's *A Man with a Quilted Sleeve* (fig. 180), ca. 1510, thought to be of the Italian poet Ludovico Ariosto.<sup>405</sup> Titian's painting was part of the large collection of Alphonso Lopez, a Jewish merchant involved in the diamond and textile trade who also acted as a representative for the king of France and the minister, Cardinal Richelieu, as a procurer of weaponry and works of art.<sup>406</sup> Lopez also purchased Raphael's painting of Castiglione at the 1639 auction. Rembrandt's keen interest in the works by Italian masters suggest that he wanted to at least study from them, if not to surpass them.

Yet unlike Rembrandt's portraits that closely resemble those by Raphael and Titian, the *Death of the Virgin* deviates from the compositional arrangement, tone, and iconography of its precedents. The sixteenth-century works may have inspired Rembrandt in creating his Dormition print, but his conception of the scene has little in common with the works by Dürer and Crabeth. Specifically, the images by Dürer and Crabeth differ from Rembrandt's print in that they both contain essential, overtly Catholic iconographic motifs of Mary's death. The Catholic motifs present in the

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Christopher White, *Rembrandt* (London and New York: Thames and Hudson, 1984), 82; White, *Rembrandt as an Etcher: A Study of the Artist at Work*, 132-34.

<sup>405</sup> White, *Rembrandt*, 82-83, 88-89.

<sup>406</sup> Steven M. Nadler, *Rembrandt's Jews* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 77.



words by Dürer and Crabeth include the depiction of the twelve disciples, the prominent staff culminating in a crucifix, the burning taper utilized in the sacrament of extreme unction, and the head priest performing Mary's last rites. Since both precedents depict the Dormition within the Roman Catholic context of a proper Christian death, neither allows us to reconcile Rembrandt's modifications with his print's pictorial tradition.

Rembrandt's complex composition may have been inspired by other, sixteenth-century images of the Dormition. Pieter Bruegel's grisaille painting, the *Death of the Virgin* (fig. 181), ca. 1564, may have been familiar to Rembrandt through its popular reproductive engraving by Philips Galle (fig. 182), 1574.<sup>407</sup> Bruegel filled his conception of Mary's death chamber with an encyclopedic array of male and female spectators in a darkened interior space and compositional devices

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<sup>407</sup> Walter Gibson notes that Abraham Ortelius probably was the first to own Bruegel's painting, which was later in Rubens's collection. Gibson links Bruegel's work to the tradition of deathbed scenes that illustrated the Office of the Dead in Flemish books of hours, such as the Grimani Breviary, 1505-10. Walter Gibson, *Bruegel* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1977), 132-33, 203. On the interpretation of this print as a political allegory that may have been painted for Abraham Ortelius, a Protestant humanist, see Urbach, "Notes on Bruegel's Archaism: His Relation to Early Netherlandish Painting and Other Sources," 238. On Rembrandt's influence by Bruegel's painting, see Bevers, "Rembrandt as an Etcher," 203; Schapelman, "The Death of the Virgin, 1639," 164; Zdanowicz, "Etchings by Rembrandt (cat. nos. 99-122)," 400. Gibson adds that Rubens may have later owned Bruegel's painting, the knowledge of which may have inspired Rembrandt to create his own version of the theme. Gibson, *Bruegel*, 203. On the engraving by Galle after Bruegel's painting, see Van der Coelen, *Rembrandts passie. Het Nieuwe Testament in de Nederlandse prentkunst van de zestiende en zeventiende eeuw*, 174, cat. no. 99; Walter S. Melion, "Ego enim quasi obdormivi: Salvation and Blessed Sleep in Philip Galle's *Death of the Virgin* after Pieter Bruegel," *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 47 (1996): 15-53.

similar to those Rembrandt chose for his print.<sup>408</sup> Rembrandt may also have known the large altarpiece, by the Dutch artist Dirck Barendsz, of the nativity from 1565 that he executed for the Catharina Gasthuis in Gouda, located less than thirty miles south of Amsterdam where Rembrandt lived.<sup>409</sup> Barendsz painted the *Dormition* on the left wing of the altarpiece and the *Assumption* on the opposite wing underscoring the conservative Catholic patronage for the work. J. Richard Judson speculates Barendsz might have painted the altarpiece for Gouda's Brethren of the Common Life—a group that sought to protect and maintain the cult of Mary.<sup>410</sup> Barendsz portrayed Mary surrounded on her canopied bed by a crowded group of male and female figures, similar to Rembrandt's etching. The paintings by Bruegel and Barendsz, however, like the Dormition images by Dürer and Crabeth, faithfully depict the administration of the last sacraments, including the burning candle, suggesting that Rembrandt may have looked beyond these works for his iconographic inspiration.

The pictorial tradition for the Dormition in Counter-Reformation Europe, as in the Northern Netherlands, maintains the significance of the last sacrament, which does not facilitate the scholarly interpretation of Rembrandt's modifications to the

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<sup>408</sup> Urbach traced the appearance of women in Dormition scenes from the thirteenth century onwards in French and Netherlandish pictures demonstrating that Bruegel's was the first to include such a large crowd of men and women within Mary's death chamber. Urbach, "Notes on Bruegel's Archaism: His Relation to Early Netherlandish Painting and Other Sources," 246. Refer also to J. F. Moffitt, "Rembrandt, Revelation and Calvin's Curtains," *Gazette des Beaux Arts* 6, no. 113 (1989): 174-86.

<sup>409</sup> For the catalogue raisonné on Barendsz and the discussion of his iconographic representation of the Dormition, see J. Richard Judson, *Dirck Barendsz., 1534-1592* (Amsterdam: Vangendt & Co., 1970), 70-73.

<sup>410</sup> *Ibid.*, 73.

*Death of the Virgin*. Antonio Campi's the *Death of the Virgin*, 1577, includes many of the same Roman Catholic iconographic motifs as in the previously discussed works by Northern artists. Campi's nocturnal scene highlights the burning death taper of extreme unction, the officiating priest leaning over Mary's bed at the left, the attendant holding the tall crucifix at the bottom right, and the figure reading from a book in the left foreground.<sup>411</sup> In another Italian example, Federico Zuccaro's drawing, the *Death of the Virgin* (fig. 183), ca. 1589, the artist depicts the palm branch handed to Mary by the angel announcing her imminent death as narrated in the legends. While these Italian examples share the same theme of Rembrandt's picture, both strictly limit the number of spectators in Mary's death chamber to the twelve apostles, excluding all women and extraneous figures from their scenes. These Italian examples, like the sixteenth-century Northern precedents, also depict Mary's death in the context of contemporary Catholic dying rituals, which eliminates a plausible influence by them on Rembrandt's the *Death of the Virgin*.

Caravaggio's the *Death of the Virgin* (fig. 184), 1606, painted for the Discalced Carmelites in Rome, omits the typical Catholic liturgical objects from his painting. Caravaggio's work includes a prominent female figure mourning beside the dead body of Mary, identified by Pamela Askew as Mary Magdalen, who parallels

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<sup>411</sup> On the Italian pictorial tradition of Mary's Dormition, refer to Askew's thorough study of Caravaggio's *Death of the Virgin* in Askew, *Caravaggio's Death of the Virgin*.

Rembrandt's depiction of a standing woman bracing one of the Virgin's bedposts.<sup>412</sup> Caravaggio also emphasizes the rafters of his interior death chamber with a dramatic swag of cloth hanging over Mary in place of the typical celestial apparition prevalent in most Dormition scenes similar to the heavy curtains and rafters in Rembrandt's print. Caravaggio's emphasis on an intense light source and the human expressions of mourning figures revealed in that light are also comparable to those elements in Rembrandt's print. While differences between the two compositions are numerous, Rembrandt could have been aware of and thus influenced by Caravaggio's work, particularly because of the public controversy surrounding the Italian artist's morbid representation of Mary that ultimately led his patrons to refuse the painting and replace it with one by Carlo Saraceni.<sup>413</sup> Still, Rembrandt's print does not share enough similarities with Caravaggio's composition to allow us to posit a strong influence from the latter's work.

A work with a stronger resemblance to Rembrandt's print in theme and composition is the reproductive engraving, the *Death of the Virgin*, published by Jan Sadeler after Cornelis Cort that he created after a lost drawing by Federico Zuccaro,

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<sup>412</sup> Askew investigates the symbolism of the curtain and other elements of this composition to an impressive degree. Her text is a helpful resource for Dormition historiography and early pictorial precedents. *Ibid.*, 15, 118.

<sup>413</sup> Saraceni received the commission for his painting in 1610, and completed it between ca. 1612 and 1615. Rubens had knowledge of the painting's availability for purchase, and recommended it to Duke Vincenzo Gonzaga of Mantua in 1607. The Gonzagas purchased the painting and eventually resold it to Charles I in 1628. Gian Alberto Dell'Acqua and Mia Cinotti, *Il Caravaggio e le sue grandi opere da San Luigi dei Francesi* (Milan: Rizzoli, 1971), 160 n. 79; Walter Friedlaender, *Caravaggio Studies* (New York: Schocken Books, 1969), 307-10. On the relationship between Rubens and Rembrandt, refer to Simon Schama, *Rembrandt's Eyes* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1999).

which dates from the second half of the sixteenth century (fig. 185).<sup>414</sup> Although a disciple in Zuccaro's work holds the flaming candle of extreme unction over Mary's head, the Italian artist organizes the figures and objects in the death chamber in a manner comparable to that in Rembrandt's print. Zuccaro's composition, like Rembrandt's, centers on Mary who lies in a canopied bed placed on an elevated floor and set at an oblique angle to the picture plane. The two prints also share in common the intensely expressive facial reactions and gestures of the figures surrounding Mary's bed as well as the representation of a shelf on the left wall and billowing clouds pushed back by flying angels in the upper right corner. Zuccaro's work cannot have served as Rembrandt's primary pictorial inspiration, however, because it does not include female figures, a doctor, or any motifs that conflict with the traditional Catholic mode of the theme's depiction.

Rembrandt's print, filled with the spectacle of celestial apparitions, angels, and figures wearing ornate garments, shares more in common with the paintings of the Assumption by Rubens, the seventeenth-century Flemish rival of Rembrandt. Rubens executed three major altarpieces and five smaller paintings depicting Mary's Assumption in the two decades prior to Rembrandt's 1639 print, most notably his 1626 oil on panel, *Assumption of the Virgin*, for the Onze-Lieve-Vrouwekathedraal in Antwerp (fig. 186).<sup>415</sup> The reproductive engravings made by Boetius Bolswert after

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<sup>414</sup> Ramaix, *The Illustrated Bartsch: Johan Sadeler I*, 3:234, cat. no. 7002.039.

<sup>415</sup> Rubens's paintings of the Assumption date from 1611-17. They were commissioned by the Antwerp Cathedral (1611-26), the Brussels Carmelite Church (1614), and the Kapellekerk in Brussels (1617 or 1618)—all cities that contained

Rubens's popular large-scale paintings may have inspired Rembrandt to produce a Marian, Catholic theme, also with remarkably large dimensions. Rembrandt's print shares with Rubens's painting the clustering of putti heads, bodies, and wings, which we also observed in Titian's, *Assumption of the Virgin*. In addition, Rembrandt's print and Rubens's painting both depict a dramatic cast of heavenly light juxtaposed against dark clouds; steps leading up to the center of their respective compositions; and a robed figure with outstretched arms gesturing toward Mary.

Rembrandt's practice of artistic emulation as well as his competitive attitude toward Rubens might also have inspired him to choose for his print the subject of Mary's death—a narrative that suggests Mary's Assumption, yet an unusual scene that artists rarely depicted by 1639. Seventeenth-century Catholic artists like Rubens preferred the Assumption to the Dormition, in support of the Catholic Church's Counter-Reformation mission to identify Mary as a heavenly intercessor and not the earthly role model as Protestants perceived her. Particularly in Flanders, where Marian devotion was reinvigorated in 1609 at the beginning of the Twelve Years' Truce, most artists like Rubens painted scenes of Mary rising majestically upward in the sky over her open tomb as opposed to scenes of Mary's death in which she is administered extreme unction.<sup>416</sup> Rembrandt's decision to etch Mary's death instead

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large Catholic populations in the seventeenth century. Knipping, *Iconography of the Counter Reformation in the Netherlands: Heaven on Earth*, 245.

<sup>416</sup> Thomas Lawrence Glen demonstrated that the Catholic interpretation of Mary in Flanders reached its peak after the signing of the Twelve Years' Truce in 1609 at which point Catholic communities in the Southern Netherlands underwent revitalization. Glen writes, "What better way to proclaim the verity of the Virgin's assumption, both to the fanciful and to Protestant non-believers alike, than through

of her resurrection in addition to his conspicuous modifications to the scene's iconography that omit any signs of Roman Catholic or Protestant confessionism, indicate that he did not base his print on a specific pictorial precedent nor did he conceptualize the print's subject or its meaning with religious audiences in mind. In light of the artist's deviations and the inclusion of a secular doctor, Rembrandt's print instead merits consideration in the context of contemporary intellectual and scientific discourses.

### **The Role of the Doctor in Rembrandt's the *Death of the Virgin***

In Rembrandt's print, Mary undergoes the process of metamorphosis into an immaterial, light-filled being. The attendance of a secular doctor clothed in seventeenth-century Dutch garb underscores for the viewer the dramatic dichotomy between the corporeal and celestial realms within which Rembrandt situates Mary. The artist boldly positions the familiar doctor-type, a member of the community of medical practitioners and scientists, in the biblical context of Mary's death chamber. The other witnesses, in sharp contrast, wear markedly unusual garments embellished with ornate, brocaded fabrics and tassels. By juxtaposing the doctor with the array of bystanders in Mary's bedchamber who wear unusual costumes, Rembrandt merges a realm of fantasy with the reality of the contemporary doctor. In Marieke de Winkel's examination of the historic and exotic costumes worn by figures in Rembrandt's other

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monumental altarpieces celebrating the event?" Thomas Lawrence Glen, "Rubens and the Counter Reformation: Studies in His Religious Paintings Between 1609 and 1620" (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 1975), 12. See also Russell, *Eva/Ave: Woman in Renaissance and Baroque Prints*, 94.

works that are similar to those depicted in the *Death of the Virgin*, she remarks that the costumes “formed a crucial signal that the scene was set in a foreign or otherwise unknown world.”<sup>417</sup> Rembrandt’s odd array of fictional costumes and everyday Dutch garments in the *Death of the Virgin*, therefore, dramatizes the differences between the doctor and the attendants, further accentuating the doctor’s unusual presence in the scene and the artist’s overall iconographic deviations from traditional scenes of the Dormition.

Rembrandt curiously substitutes a secular doctor for the leading apostle Peter or the officiating apostle in the guise of a priest, which is unprecedented.<sup>418</sup> The *Legenda aurea* and other New Testament apocryphal narratives make no mention of a doctor present at Mary’s death, nor is there any pictorial convention for including a doctor in a Dormition scene. Christian Tümpel argued that Rembrandt derived the Dutch doctor in his print from other deathbed scenes, such as one possibly by Jan de Swart of Groningen.<sup>419</sup> Although Tümpel did not provide an example of De Swart’s

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<sup>417</sup> Winkel notes that Rembrandt owned “ancient textiles,” which were recorded in the 1656 inventory of his belongings after he declared bankruptcy. For a discussion on the meaning of fanciful costumes in Rembrandt’s works, refer to Marieke de Winkel, “Fashion or Fancy? Some Interpretations of the Dress of Rembrandt’s Women Re-evaluated,” in *Rembrandt’s Women*, ed. Julia Lloyd Williams, 61-62.

<sup>418</sup> Visser ‘t Hooft identifies Rembrandt’s doctor as the apostle Peter based on his central role in the composition. Willem Adolf Visser ‘t Hooft, *Rembrandt and the Gospel*, 44. Ackley identifies the balding male figure holding Mary’s pillow and wiping her mouth with a towel as Peter, due only to his bald pate. Ackley, *Rembrandt’s Journey: Painter, Draftsman, Etcher*, 138. Both attributions lack concrete support from literary or pictorial sources to qualify them for serious consideration.

<sup>419</sup> Tümpel briefly mentioned the example he tentatively attributed to De Swart, but did not reproduce the work in his book. Tümpel, *Rembrandt legt die Bibel*



work on the theme, the artist's etching, the *Birth of John the Baptist* (fig. 187), from the series the *Life of John the Baptist*, 1534-58, provides an interesting point of comparison. De Swart's scene does not include a doctor, but the architectonic structure of his domestic interior and the similar position of the canopied bed are similar to the respective elements in Rembrandt's print.

The rarity of deathbed scenes in Dutch art, and perhaps the complete absence of doctors represented in these images, makes Tümpel's hypothesis extremely unlikely. While Marijn Schapelhouman has pointed out that portraits of deceased people are common in seventeenth-century Dutch art, such the drawing of a dead woman in bed with a man standing beside her by Jacques de Gheyn II of 1601 (fig. 188), few images exist that depict the rituals or medical treatment performed shortly before or after a person has died.<sup>420</sup> In a scene in which we would expect to see a doctor included among the mourners, such as Cornelis van Dalen's etching of the *stadholder* (fig. 189), Frederik Hendrik, at his death in 1647, no doctor is present.<sup>421</sup> The *stadholder* lies in repose in his canopied bed surrounded by numerous attendants, presumably at a moment soon after death, yet a doctor cannot be identified among the mourners. Rembrandt also excludes a doctor from all of his other numerous deathbed

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aus: *Zeichnungen und Radierungen aus dem Kupferstichkabinett der Staatlichen Museen Preussischer Kulturbesitz Berlin*, n.p., cat. no. 127.

<sup>420</sup> Schapelhouman interprets De Gheyn's miniature as a *memento mori* because of the male's facial expression and the brightly lit candle on the bedside table. Luijten et al., eds., *Dawn of the Golden Age. Northern Netherlandish Art, 1580-1620*, 588-89, cat. no. 260.

<sup>421</sup> Pieter Post, *Begraeffnisse van syne hoogheyt Frederick Henrick* (Amsterdam: Nicolaes van Ravesteyn, 1651).

scenes, including his drawing, *Death of Jacob* (fig. 190), despite the visual and iconographic similarities between the images and his Dormition print.

The doctor in Rembrandt's the *Death of the Virgin* seems to derive from no extant pictorial source in Dutch art history or in his own *oeuvre*. Instead, the doctor is a new visual trope based on everyday Dutch life and standard medical practices of which Rembrandt would certainly have been aware in light of his wife Saskia's illness. Together with the omission of recognizable liturgical objects typically present in other Dormition scenes, the doctor, I argue, presents an essential key to interpreting the meaning behind the artist's complex modifications to his print. Rembrandt's unprecedented replacement of an apostle or priest with a doctor substantially alters the theme's original Roman Catholic context and, thus, its overall meaning. Anat Gilboa describes the significance of Rembrandt's doctor, stating "Rembrandt's scene emphasizes Mary's human nature: she is shown dying like any mortal," then adds, "there is also a touch of realism in the way that the artist showed a physician feeling the pulse of his failing patient."<sup>422</sup> Rembrandt's association of a Dutch doctor grasping Mary's wrist thus relatively conflates the biblical and the contemporary—the religious and the secular—in a way that defines the tensions in early modernity. The prestige of doctors and medicine began to supersede religious dogma and superstition.

Art historians have agreed that Rembrandt's unique contribution lies in his doctor taking Mary's pulse, yet none have recognized how the doctor and the print's

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<sup>422</sup> Gilboa, *Images of the Feminine in Rembrandt's Work*, 59.

idiosyncratic iconography showcases a pivotal stage in the Dutch Republic's transition into the modern age. Rembrandt's 1639 etching exemplifies the extraordinary advancements in empirical science, medicine, mathematics, applied research, and rational philosophy that took place after the mid-1630s in the Dutch Republic. The widespread publicity arising from the controversial heliocentric theories of Copernicus and Galileo, caused Dutch intellectuals, academics, laypeople, and artists like Rembrandt to respond with enthusiasm. The Scientific Revolution generated treatises, new technologies, revised curriculum at universities, and works of art that participated in the updated mode of empirical scientific inquiry.

### **Early Enlightenment Concepts in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Society**

To fully understand Rembrandt's unprecedented iconographic modifications in the *Death of the Virgin* and in particular its secular, scientific component, we need to examine the cultural climate in which the artist produced his print. While scholars have rightly addressed the Republic's Protestant hegemony in general and its relevance to Rembrandt's print, recent scholarship argues that the seventeenth-century Netherlands supported a vibrant intellectual climate characterized and dominated by the theories of the French philosopher René Descartes. Descartes produced his most important theories at a time that coincided with Rembrandt's the *Death of the Virgin*.

The convergence of rational inquiry and Mary seems not only pertinent to Rembrandt, but also to the renowned Dordrecht physician and author of widely used

medical handbooks, Johan van Beverwijk. Van Beverwijk's treatise of esteemed women and their virtues, *Van de wtmentheyt des vrouwelicken geslachts* (On the Excellence of the Female Sex), was published in 1639—the same year that Rembrandt etched the *Death of the Virgin*. Van Beverwijk argued against the Aristotelian notion of women's biological deficiencies. He posited that Mary and her body made possible the miracle of the Incarnation, thus warranting an appreciation of her:

The Lord Christ was called the Son of Man; but this he could not be except because of his Mother. And if women were not persons, then men would be born out of those who are not persons, which would be illogical. Besides that we have, as far as both our body and our mind are concerned, more characteristics of the mother than of the father."<sup>423</sup>

As Rembrandt does in the *Death of the Virgin*, Van Beverwijk appropriates Mary as a unique figure who exists between the natural and otherworldly and calls into question the nature of the human body and its mortality—one of the defining issues of seventeenth-century science.<sup>424</sup>

Building on the significant work of Max Weber and Heinz Schilling, current scholarship by Willem Frijhoff, Jonathan Israel, Marijke Spies, and Martin Prak

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<sup>423</sup> Johan van Beverwyck, *Van de wtmentheyt des vrouwelicken geslachts* (Dordrecht: Jasper Gorissz., 1639), 13. On this quote, see Joyce L. Irwin, *Womanhood in Radical Protestantism, 1525-1675* (New York and Toronto: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1979), 5-6. I am grateful to Sarah Crawford-Parker for sharing this source with me.

<sup>424</sup> Van Beverwijk's own dedication to scientific developments led him to meet and correspond with Descartes as early as 1643. Two extant letters exchanged in 1643 between Johan van Beverwijk and Descartes indicate that they knew each other at least by that year. For their letters, see Van Beverwijk to Descartes, June 10, 1634, in Charles Adam and Paul Tannery, eds., *Oeuvres de Descartes*, rev. ed. (Paris: Vrin, 1964-76), 3: 682. For Descartes to Van Beverwijk, July 5, 1643, see Charles Adam and Paul Tannery, eds., *Oeuvres de Descartes*, 4: 3-6.

argues that the birth of the Enlightenment and modernity began not in France or England in the early eighteenth century, but around the year 1650 in the Dutch Republic as Descartes' theories gained a foothold in the Dutch intellectual arena.<sup>425</sup> These scholars have all detected in the Republic's political and intellectual discourse of free and open debate a nascent Enlightenment culture.<sup>426</sup> Politicians, philosophers, theologians, and artists in the Republic aggressively challenged traditional systems of ecclesiastical authority and faith. For Frijhoff and Spies, social debate—an integral part of Dutch identity—provided the vehicle for a remarkable transition to modernity made possible by the freedom of religion in the early seventeenth century. Frijhoff and Spies write, “If we want to grasp Dutch culture in the European context at its workaday level, one notion immediately presents itself, namely that of a never-

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<sup>425</sup> The seventeenth-century Dutch Republic's progressive and modernizing impulses have already been attributed by Max Weber and Heinz Schilling to Calvinism and the confessionalization of the Calvinist, Catholic, and Lutheran Churches. Schilling, *Religion, Political Culture and the Emergence of Early Modern Society: Essays in German and Dutch History*; Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, trans. Talcott Parsons (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958). For Descartes' impact on the eighteenth-century Enlightenment, see Peter A. Schouls, *Descartes and the Enlightenment* (Kingston, ON: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1989), 66-71; Leonard P. Wessell, *G. E. Lessing's Theology. A Reinterpretation, a Study in the Problematic Nature of the Enlightenment* [sic] (The Hague: Mouton, 1977), 47-62. For earlier, traditional views of the Enlightenment and its origins, see Ernst Cassirer, *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1951); Peter Gay, *The Enlightenment: An Interpretation*, 2 vols. (New York: Knopf, 1966-69); Norman Hampson, *The Enlightenment* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1968).

<sup>426</sup> Frijhoff and Spies, *1650: Hard-Won Unity*; Israel, *Radical Enlightenment: Philosophy and the Making of Modernity, 1650-1750*; Prak, *The Dutch Republic in the Seventeenth Century*.

flagging discussion culture shared by all segments and groups of society.”<sup>427</sup>

Rembrandt’s print, which blatantly disregards confessional allegiances in its deliberate omission of Catholic and Protestant motifs, is as a byproduct of the Dutch secular discussion culture and the Scientific Revolution.

The exceptional scientific advances in the early seventeenth century permeated the fertile intellectual climate of the Republic in the years before Rembrandt etched the *Death of the Virgin*.<sup>428</sup> For example, Nicolaus Mulerius, an astronomer, physician, and professor in Groningen, edited Copernicus’s heliocentric theories in his seminal treatise *De revolutionibus orbium coelestium* (On the Revolutions of the Heavenly Spheres); he published this book in 1617 in Amsterdam with special notations under the title *Astronomia instaurata* (Renewed Astronomy).<sup>429</sup> Galileo’s transformative *Dialogo sopra i due massimi sistemi del mondo, Tolemaico e Copernicano* (Dialogue Concerning the Two Chief World

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<sup>427</sup> The authors credit the Republic’s commitment to social debate to the open, public sphere where the Dutch could freely discuss issues in meetings, on barges that served as public transportation, and in the popularity and wide availability of pamphlets, broadsheets, flyers, and prints that were broadly disseminated. Frijhoff and Spies, *1650: Hard-Won Unity*, 220-21.

<sup>428</sup> On the Scientific Revolution in the Netherlands, see Harold J. Cook, "The Cutting Edge of a Revolution? Medicine and Natural History Near the Shores of the North Sea," in *Renaissance and Revolution: Humanists, Scholars, Craftsmen, and Natural Philosophers in Early Modern Europe*, ed. J. V. Field and Frank A. J. L. James (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 45-61; Harold J. Cook, "The New Philosophy in the Low Countries," in *The Scientific Revolution in National Context*, ed. Roy Porter and Mikulás Teich (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 115-49; Roger French, "Harvey in Holland: Circulation and the Calvinists," in *The Medical Revolution of the Seventeenth Century*, ed. Roger French and Andrew Wear (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 46-86.

<sup>429</sup> Nicolaus Copernicus, *Astronomia instaurata*, trans. Nicolaus Mulerius (Amsterdam: Willem Jansz Blaeu, 1617).

Systems, Ptolemaic and Copernican), which he first published in 1632 in Florence, also circulated in a new edition published in 1635 in Leiden.<sup>430</sup>

In many of his prints, drawings, and paintings throughout the 1630s, Rembrandt demonstrated a strong interest in the scientific examination of nature, perhaps inspired by the spate of treatises available from local Amsterdam booksellers. By 1632 Rembrandt knew the popular anatomy book by Andreas Vesalius, *De humani corporis fabrica* (On the Structure of the Human Body), which was first published in 1543. The artist used Vesalius's frontispiece as a model for his portrait of Dr. Tulp in *The Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Nicolaes Tulp* (fig. 191), 1632, presumably at Tulp's request.<sup>431</sup> During this period he also produced numerous images of butchered meat, the human skeleton, and exotic animals, such as elephants and camels. Like many Dutch scientists and intellectuals, Rembrandt fueled his interest in science by avidly collecting natural specimens, including seashells, coral, and stuffed reptiles and birds.<sup>432</sup> Some of his works illustrating these object emphasize the formal

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<sup>430</sup> Galileo's book, originally published in 1632, argues against the Church and its claim that the Earth is at the center of the universe. He posits that the Earth's terrain is not unique in comparison to the moon, and that the Sun revolves around the Earth. Galileo Galilei, *Dialogo sopra i due massimi sistemi del mondo, Tolemaico e Copernicano* (Leiden: Abraham Elzevier, 1635). Galileo's treatise ultimately led to his condemnation by the Pope and he was forced to recant his findings before the Inquisition in 1633. After his trial he was compelled to live under house arrest for the remainder of his life. M. A. Finocchiaro, *The Galileo Affair: A Documentary History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 67-68; George Molland, "Science and Mathematics from the Renaissance to Descartes," 119, 122.

<sup>431</sup> Alpers, *Rembrandt's Enterprise: The Studio and the Market*, 27; John Rupert Martin, "Rembrandt and Rubens," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 130 (1986): 7.

<sup>432</sup> Rembrandt's collection of naturalia is recorded in the 1656 inventory of his possessions made when he filed for bankruptcy. For a discussion of the inventory, see

study of his subject and others, such as Tulp's dissection, investigate different forms of rational, scientific inquiry. For example, his previously discussed etching, *Death Appearing to a Wedded Couple*, explores the concept of the passage of time, symbolized by a skeleton. Rembrandt produced his 1639 etching of the Dormition at the end of a particularly creative and experimental decade. His analyses of the natural world—before death, after death, and on the abstract notion of death—presents the possibility that his Dormition print could also connote a curiosity concerning a scientific understanding of the process of death.

Indeed, the *Death of the Virgin* evokes Rembrandt's distinct fascination with empirical scientific advancements in its prominent symbol of science—the doctor—in the center of the composition, together with the artist's depiction of the supremacy of Mary's inner self that he foregrounds over the corporeality of her (equally as pure) body. Rembrandt informs both the doctor and Mary's ephemeral figure with the seventeenth-century premise that the mind and its capability for rational inquiry could achieve practical scientific knowledge. As part of the Scientific Revolution and its modern, secular mode of examining the world, the theories that scientists and philosophers, such as Galileo and Descartes, put forward irrevocably altered Europe's religious and academic spheres.

The new scientific and philosophic theories that permeated Europe overturned Aristotle's "naïve realism" that knowledge should be received uncritically through the

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Bob van den Boogert et al., *Rembrandts schatkamer* (Zwolle: Waanders Uitgevers and Museum Het Rembrandthuis, 1999).



body's senses.<sup>433</sup> Aristotle's philosophy that the mind and body must be united in order for the body's senses to function properly as a conduit to knowledge was widely used by Catholics in the early seventeenth century to clarify and interpret theology.<sup>434</sup> Both the mind and body, therefore, must draw knowledge from intellectual and sensory faculties for a full and complete understanding of nature. In the thirteenth century, Thomas Aquinas adapted the Aristotelian premise of mind-body unity in his scholastic method and added that the grace of God granted reason, knowledge of truths, and mind-body unity. Aquinas's concept of the mutual inclusivity of the mind and body under God reigned in the pictorial tradition of Mary's Dormition, Christ's Resurrection, and the Last Judgment until the spread of scientific developments in the mid-seventeenth century that generated discourse about doubt, skepticism, and a rational study of the Bible and nature, which Rembrandt's print evokes.<sup>435</sup>

### **Empiricism and Cartesianism in Rembrandt's *the Death of the Virgin***

While the subject of Rembrandt's *the Death of the Virgin* is distinctly religious, he approaches its iconography from a scientifically and philosophically

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<sup>433</sup> Theo Verbeek, *Descartes and the Dutch: Early Reactions to Cartesian Philosophy, 1637-1650* (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1992), 7.

<sup>434</sup> Israel, *Radical Enlightenment: Philosophy and the Making of Modernity, 1650-1750*, 27; Geneviève Rodis-Lewis, "Descartes and the Unity of the Human Being," in *Descartes* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 197; Verbeek, *Descartes and the Dutch: Early Reactions to Cartesian Philosophy, 1637-1650*, 7.

<sup>435</sup> For a summary of the ideological conflict between the seventeenth-century Dutch Aristotelians and those, including Descartes, that supported a new scientific philosophy, see Frijhoff and Spies, *1650: Hard-Won Unity*, 292; Verbeek, *Descartes and the Dutch: Early Reactions to Cartesian Philosophy, 1637-1650*, 6-7.

enlightened viewpoint. The doctor taking Mary's pulse in the image evokes seventeenth-century scientific methods of observation and logical reasoning that characterize Francis Bacon's *Historia vitae et mortis* (History of Life and Death), published in a 1637 edition in Leiden.<sup>436</sup> Bacon systematically analyzed animate beings in nature—man equally among them—to determine the ways in which they each live and die. An empiricist, Bacon applied his new scientific approach in experimentation, induction, close observation, and collection of information as a means to find truths in nature. In his methodical study of death, Bacon remarked:

Convulsions of the Head, and Face, with deepe deadly sighing, being a *kind* of Convulsion, and the extreame quicke beating of the Pulse, the Heart trembling with the pangs of Death; and sometimes againe beating weakely, and slowly, as the heate beginnes to faile and faint, are two chiefe Signes of Death . . . The immediate Signes of death are, great unquietnesse, tumbling, and striving, raking with the hands, as if gathering lockes of Wooll, striving to take hold, and holding fast, hard shutting of the Teeth, ratling in the throate, trembling of the under-lip, pale countenance, confused memory, speechlesnesse, cold sweats, stretching out the Body, lifing up the white of the eyes, and an alteration of the whole Face, (the Nose becoming sharp, the eyes hollow, and the cheekes falling) with the Contraction and Convulsion of the Tongue, and coldnesse of the lowest parts, and sometimes issuing of Blood, or seede, loud shrieking, short breathing, the falling of the lower jaws, and the like.<sup>437</sup>

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<sup>436</sup> The 1637 edition was one of many of Bacon's editions and translations that appeared in the 1630s in Leiden and Amsterdam. Although no extant evidence indicates that Rembrandt owned one of Bacon's books, the former certainly could have been aware of the latter's theories through the availability and popularity of the treatises. Franciscus baro de Verulamio, *Historia vitae et morits* (Lugduni Batavorum [Leiden]: Jan Maire, 1637). On Bacon, see Frijhoff and Spies, *1650: Hard-Won Unity*, 288; Molland, "Science and Mathematics from the Renaissance to Descartes," 109.

<sup>437</sup> This passage is quoted from an anonymous English translation of Bacon's *Historia vitae et mortis*. Francis Bacon, *The Historie of Life and Death. With Observations Naturall and Experimentall for the Prolonging of LIFE*, trans. Francis Lord Verulam and Viscount S. Alban (London: Printed by I. Okes, for Humphrey Mosley, 1638), 268.

Bacon's excerpt articulates his emphasis on the precise study of individual aspects of death that affect the body, and clearly ignores any presence of God, angels, or the like. Bacon examines the "extreame quicke beating of the Pulse" as a typical aspect to observe in a dying person. In Rembrandt's print, the doctor holds Mary's wrist to monitor her heartbeat and determine the condition of her health—an example of Baconian science in action.

Rembrandt's *Death of the Virgin* foregrounds not only Bacon's physical, empirical approach to death through the doctor's prominence in the center of the composition, but also stresses René Descartes' new metaphysical argument for the supremacy of the intellect, or soul, in the print's ephemeral treatment of Mary's body.<sup>438</sup> While living in the Netherlands, Descartes published *Discours de la method* (Discourse on Method) anonymously in Leiden in 1637. In the same year of Rembrandt's etching, 1639, Descartes worked on his highly influential treatise, the *Meditationes*.<sup>439</sup> Together with the *Discours*, the *Meditationes* explore Descartes'

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<sup>438</sup> For a compelling discussion of the methodological similarities between Bacon's *Novum Organum* and Descartes' *Regulae*, see Robert C. Miner, "The Baconian Matrix of Descartes's *Regulae*," in *Descartes and Cartesianism*, ed. Nathan Smith and Jason Taylor (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Press, 2005), 1-20.

<sup>439</sup> René Descartes, *Discours de la methode pour bien conduire sa raison, & chercher la verité dans les sciences. Plus la dioptrique. Les meteores. Et la geometrie. Qui sont des essais de cete Methode* (Leyde [Leiden]: Jan Maire, 1637). Descartes wrote the *Meditationes* between 1638 and 1640, which he published in 1641 in Leiden. His treatise is fully entitled: *Meditationes de prima philosophia in qua Dei existentia, & animæ humanæ à corpore distinctio, demonstratur* (Meditations on First Philosophy, in which are demonstrated the existence of God and the distinction between the human soul and the body). Part of Descartes' goal in writing the *Meditationes* was to clarify and respond to the numerous comments, questions, and objections he received during the three years following the publication of the *Discours*. His ongoing philosophic conversations with friends and critics in the

theory of the mutual exclusivity of the mind and body, known as Cartesian duality, which contributed significantly to creating a general awareness of practical mathematic and scientific applications to the human body, natural philosophy, and biology.<sup>440</sup> Descartes' theory of mind-body duality explores the mind's unique

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Republic and his theories, written and published in that country, indicate the Dutch fascination with Cartesian dualism in 1639. Certainly, the general excitement and discourse surrounding Descartes' work could have inspired Rembrandt to produce the print under discussion. Gaukroger explains that one-fifth of Descartes' entire correspondence, much of which has been carefully preserved and published, dates from the late 1630s around the time of Rembrandt's print. Stephen Gaukroger, *Descartes: An Intellectual Biography* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 326, 334, 336-37. Descartes reportedly received so many objections to the *Discours* that he catalogued them and responded to each of them in written letters he sent to his critics. Robert Ariew and Marjorie Glicksman Grene, eds., *Descartes and His Contemporaries: Meditations, Objections, and Replies* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 11. The Dutch mathematician Isaac Beeckman was one of Descartes' strongest influences. Descartes befriended Beeckman in 1618. John Cottingham, "Descartes: Metaphysics and the Philosophy of Mind," in *The Renaissance and Seventeenth-Century Rationalism*, ed. G.H.R. Parkinson, *Routledge History of Philosophy* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), 203; Molland, "Science and Mathematics from the Renaissance to Descartes," 109-10. On Cartesianism in the Netherlands, see Van Bunge, *From Stevin to Spinoza: An Essay on Philosophy in the Seventeenth-Century Dutch Republic*; E. J. Dijksterhuis, *Descartes et le cartésianisme hollandais* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1951); Frijhoff and Spies, *1650: Hard-Won Unity*; Thomas A. McGahagan, "Cartesianism in the Netherlands, 1639-1676: The New Science and the Calvinist Counter-Reformation" (Ph.D. diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1976); Molland, "Science and Mathematics from the Renaissance to Descartes," 125-26; J. A. van Ruler, *The Crisis of Causality: Voetius and Descartes on God, Nature, and Change* (Leiden and New York: E. J. Brill, 1995), 2-37; John Andrew Schuster, *Descartes and the Scientific Revolution, 1619-1634: An Interpretation*, 2 vols. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977); C. Louise Thijssen-Schoute and Theo Verbeek, *Nederlands cartesianisme* (Utrecht: HES, 1989); Verbeek, *Descartes and the Dutch: Early Reactions to Cartesian Philosophy, 1637-1650*, 81-90.

<sup>440</sup> Kuno Fischer was the first to analyze the significance of Descartes' methodology and its impact on modern science and philosophy. See Kuno Fischer, *Geschichte der neueren Philosophie*, 10 vols. (Heidelberg: C. Winter, 1852-93). On Fischer's contributions to the study of Descartes, see John Cottingham, *Descartes* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 4; Stephen Gaukroger, "Descartes:

distinction from the body and the necessity of mathematics, understood through the mind, to provide a firm foundation for the sciences.<sup>441</sup> Rembrandt's print evokes Descartes' systematic view of the mind and body at the helm of science, by virtue of the doctor, as opposed to religion, by omission of confessional motifs.

Descartes did not write the *Discours* in Latin, the traditional language of scholarly publications, but in French so as to appeal to a mass audience including women and non-philosophers.<sup>442</sup> Wiep van Bunge, in fact, claims that most of Descartes' supporters in the Dutch Republic were non-academics who took interest in the philosopher's devotion to mathematics and scientific inquiry.<sup>443</sup> This same group constituted the audience for Rembrandt's prints, which underscores the likelihood

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Methodology," in *The Renaissance and Seventeenth-Century Rationalism*, ed. G. H. R. Parkinson, *Routledge History of Philosophy* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), 167.

<sup>441</sup> Descartes fully discloses the scientific, as opposed to the philosophical, purpose of his treatise in its complete title: *Discours de la methode pour bien conduire sa raison, & chercher la verité dans les sciences. Plus La dioptrique. Les meteores. Et La geometrie. Qui sont des essais de cete methode* (Discourse on the Method of rightly conducting reason and reaching the truth in the sciences). He wrote the *Discours* between 1635 and 1636. He intended to have his treatise published by the prominent Elzevier publishing house in Leiden, but due to heated a disagreement with its owners about which Descartes' biographers still do not know the details, he turned instead to the Leiden publisher Jan Maire. Descartes signed a contract with Maire in December 1636 for an edition of 3,000 copies of the *Discours*. Gaukroger, *Descartes: An Intellectual Biography*, 305, 322.

<sup>442</sup> Descartes discussed his intention to reach a wide audience with the *Discours* in a letter in which he stated that he wrote the treatise in such a way that even women could understand his text. See Descartes to Vatier, 22 Feb 1638, in Charles Adam and Paul Tannery, eds., *Oeuvres de Descartes*, 1:560. For a discussion of this letter, see Gaukroger, *Descartes: An Intellectual Biography*, 322.

<sup>443</sup> The author notes that the nonacademics were mostly comprised of amateur scientists and intellectuals. Wiep van Bunge, *From Stevin to Spinoza: An Essay on Philosophy in the Seventeenth-Century Dutch Republic*, 92.

that many of Rembrandt's print buyers were receptive to Cartesian ideas on death, religiosity and the soul, and sought after the *Death of the Virgin*.

Descartes' philosophic method began transforming Dutch intellectual and academic circles before Rembrandt etched his print and continued through the mid-seventeenth century. Jonathan Israel describes this period of "unprecedented intellectual turmoil" that began with the development of Cartesianism, which he called the "crisis of the European mind."<sup>444</sup> George Molland characterized Descartes' hypotheses in his study of seventeenth-century science as "the culmination of the first phase of the Scientific Revolution," in which Cartesianism overthrew Aristotelian natural philosophy, which was later replaced with Newtonianism.<sup>445</sup> On Descartes' remarkable influence on the Dutch, Wiep van Bunge argued that Cartesianism incited a "philosophical revolution" at universities around the year 1650, which effectively suspended educational instruction through the Aristotelian method and replaced it with a curriculum modeled after Descartes' treatises.<sup>446</sup>

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<sup>444</sup> Israel, *Radical Enlightenment: Philosophy and the Making of Modernity, 1650-1750*, 14.

<sup>445</sup> Molland, "Science and Mathematics from the Renaissance to Descartes," 132.

<sup>446</sup> The author adds, "Indeed, the breakthrough of mathematical models for mechanics and of the mechanistic worldview for natural philosophy in general, implied a farewell to a perception of natural phenomena which connected with the everyday experience of the world, such as it had been delivered by the Aristotelian tradition. The quantitative world that now was being scrutinized by the physician had little to do with the qualitative, sublunar and orderly space filled with natural substances Peripateticism sought to describe. To put it differently, the world construed by the Cartesian physicist no longer resembled the world in which he actually lived. Cartesian natural philosophy was decidedly anti-intuitive: in reality, it argued, apples are not 'red' at all, and when we call pears 'sweet', we do not really

According to Israel, Descartes created “an upheaval which heralded the onset of the Enlightenment proper in the closing years of the century.”<sup>447</sup> Israel, Willem Frijhoff, Marijke Spies, and Martin Prak all note that Descartes’ philosophy of Cartesian dualism was consequential to the construction and molding of modernity in the Republic. Israel referred to Descartes’ work as a “philosophical enterprise . . . a project which Bayle and most of the *philosophes* of the eighteenth century, for all their criticism, continued to venerate as marking the true beginning of ‘modernity’ and ‘enlightenment’ in men’s ideas.”<sup>448</sup> For these scholars, Cartesianism and other products of the Scientific Revolution gave rise by the mid-seventeenth century to the period of modernity in the Northern Netherlands to which Rembrandt introduced to audiences in 1639.

Rembrandt’s ethereal treatment of Mary’s body suggests the Cartesian, not theological, superiority of Mary’s soul over her body because of the presence of a doctor and the omission of liturgical and devotional motifs in the scene. Descartes’ treatise outlines his theory of dualism in which the mind, or soul, is separate from and superior to the body, and that the mind/soul is both immaterial and immortal.<sup>449</sup> Descartes argued that the mind/soul can think, reason, and doubt, thus, it functions

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know what we are saying.” Van Bunge, *From Stevin to Spinoza: An Essay on Philosophy in the Seventeenth-Century Dutch Republic*, 56, 163.

<sup>447</sup> Israel, *Radical Enlightenment: Philosophy and the Making of Modernity, 1650-1750*, 14.

<sup>448</sup> Ibid., 24.

<sup>449</sup> Descartes’ *Discours* was published with three short essays: “La Dioptrique,” “Les Météors,” and “La Géométrie.” According to Descartes, the essays demonstrate his theories outlined in the treatise’s introductory essay. Cottingham, *Descartes*, 5 n. 7.

independently of the body. According to Descartes, the mind operates as the epistemological source for clear and distinct ideas, that is, innate truths established by deductive reasoning, thinking, and doubting. Descartes proved the existence of his own mind with his famous aphorism, *Je pense, donc je suis* (I think, therefore I am), given in Latin as *cogito ergo sum*. The self is a “thinking entity,” the *res cogitans*, which exists apart from the physicality of the body. The body, on the other hand, extends into space and can be separated into parts that will eventually die.<sup>450</sup>

Descartes instructs his readers in the *Discours* ultimately to transcend the body to allow the thinking, doubting mind to gain knowledge unfettered by the body’s senses. He argued that with mathematics he could measure and quantify the movement of particles in all corporeal matter in a process that John Cottingham refers to as “a single uniform set of simple mathematico-mechanical principles to cover all known phenomena.”<sup>451</sup> Rembrandt’s the *Death of the Virgin* evokes the separation of the mind/soul and body. While Rembrandt’s *oeuvre* includes numerous images of ethereal religious figures, such as *The Raising of Lazarus* (fig. 192), ca. 1632, however, as Julia Lloyd Williams rightly pointed out, only in the *Death of the Virgin* does Rembrandt juxtapose an unearthly figure with a secular figure, implying a scientifically enlightened, not religious, awareness of the body and soul.<sup>452</sup>

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<sup>450</sup> Cottingham, "Descartes: Metaphysics and the Philosophy of Mind," 217-18; Cottingham, *Descartes*, 5.

<sup>451</sup> Descartes’ measurable phenomena, according to Cottingham, exclude “human thought and consciousness.” Cottingham, *Descartes*, 5.

<sup>452</sup> Williams, *Rembrandt's Women*, 165.



The doctor in Rembrandt's print signifies the emphasis in the seventeenth-century Republic on the comprehension of the body through mathematical, scientific terms that grew out of Descartes' theories. The numerous illustrations in the *Discours* visually interpret the philosopher's quantitative deconstruction of the human body. Descartes designed the images himself and had them engraved by the Leiden mathematician Frans van Schooten, whose father, Joris van Schooten, was one of Rembrandt's instructors.<sup>453</sup> In a picture that appears in "La Dioptrique," one of three essays in the *Discours*, Descartes makes a compelling juxtaposition between a naturalized rendering of a male head in the lower half of the image and a mechanically diagrammed cross-section of an eye upon which the male head gazes (fig. 193). The illustration supports Descartes' conceptualization of the human body as an object comprised of geometrically shaped parts that can be subdivided, labeled, and mathematically measured—an abstract notion he revealed through the form of visual imagery as a useful tool of communication, which as an artist, Rembrandt would have appreciated.

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<sup>453</sup> In a letter to Mersenne dated March 1636, Descartes wrote about his original draft of the *Discours* stating, "The only problem is that my copy is not written any better than this letter, the handwriting and punctuation are just as poor, and the illustrations are drawn only by myself—in other words, very poorly. The result is that, if you did not interpret them for the engravers, they would not be able to understand them." Descartes to Mersenne, March 1636 in René Descartes and Desmond M. Clarke, *Discourse on Method and Related Writings* (London and New York: Penguin Books, 1999), 57. On Descartes' use of technical engravings in his treatises to illustrate his mechanistic, deductive understanding of the human body, see Brian S. Baigrie, "Descartes's Scientific Illustrations and 'la grande mécanique de la nature'," in *Picturing Knowledge: Historical and Philosophical Problems Concerning the Use of Art in Science*, ed. Brian S. Baigrie (Toronto, Buffalo, and London: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 86-134.

Descartes' numerous didactic illustrations in the *Discours* not only suggest that Descartes worked closely with at least one Dutch artist in Rembrandt's environs, but also that he relied upon and valued visual images as a pictorial conduit to convey his theories to his readers.<sup>454</sup> We can logically deduce from the imagery created and incorporated by Descartes to support the text of his own treatise that he would also have approved the use of other visual images, such as Rembrandt's print, that capture the concept of body's physicality existing separately from the soul. In effect, as Brian S. Baigrie argued, Descartes' illustrations operated as a tool to visualize the "insensible," unseen aspects of the mechanized world. Martin Kemp adds that although Descartes recognized the limitations of his diagrammatic images in the *Discours*, he relied upon pictorial means as a "mechanical analogy" to prove phenomena unnoticeable to the human eye, such as in the image of a blind man using two sticks to see (fig. 194).<sup>455</sup> Rembrandt's print, like Descartes' metaphysical illustrations, also records that which we cannot see in nature—the bifurcation of

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<sup>454</sup> Baigrie attributes Descartes' illustrations to the Leiden artist Frans van Schooten. Baigrie, "Descartes's Scientific Illustrations and 'la grande mécanique de la nature'," 87-88.

<sup>455</sup> According to Kemp, Descartes' publications "exploit virtually all the modes of illustration available in the seventeenth century" from pictorial images to diagrams and coordinate geometry in order to demonstrate his theories. In reference to an image that appears in the *Discours* of a man using two sticks in lieu of his eyes in order to see, Descartes commented that the image should not be interpreted literally. According to Kemp, Descartes reportedly either said or wrote in his correspondence, "I did not say that light was extended like a stick, but like the actions or movements transmitted by a stick." Martin Kemp, *Visualizations: The Nature Book of Art and Science* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: The University of California Press, 2000), 39.

Mary's body and soul transformed from a religious mystery into a rational, scientific process by virtue of the doctor who ascertains the moment of her death.<sup>456</sup>

The possibility that Rembrandt's inspiration for *Death of the Virgin* derived in part from Descartes' *Discours* is strengthened by Martin Royalton-Kisch's convincing proposal that the artist based his etching, *The Three Trees* (fig. 195), 1643, on the *Discours*. Royalton-Kisch demonstrated that atmospheric qualities in the etching and its overall composition of a landscape share remarkable visual similarities with Frans van Schooten's illustration of cloud formations for Descartes' second essay in the *Discours*, "Les météores" (fig. 196).<sup>457</sup> Rembrandt's print adopts a comparable dominant shape in the right third of the composition in the cluster of trees, a voluminous negative space filling the left side, and a dramatic opening in the sky in the upper left that appear in Van Schooten's engraving of a monolithic rock formation and the clouds that surround it. The likelihood that the *Discours* influenced both the *Death of the Virgin* and *The Three Trees* is further underscored by the general consensus among scholars that Rembrandt initially began the *Death of the Virgin* on a smaller plate that he reused for *The Three Trees*, which indicates that he may have conceived their compositions and meanings at the same time.<sup>458</sup>

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<sup>456</sup> Baigrie, "Descartes's Scientific Illustrations and 'la grande mécanique de la nature'," 87.

<sup>457</sup> The author notes that his comparison between the images by Rembrandt and Van Schooten first appeared in his unpublished lectures. Martin Royalton-Kisch in Erik Hinterding, Ger Luijten, and Martin Royalton-Kisch, *Rembrandt the Printmaker*, 207-8.

<sup>458</sup> Scholars have observed that some impressions of Rembrandt's etching, *The Three Trees*, 1643, contain compositional elements from the *Death of the Virgin*. Hinterding posits that Rembrandt began the *Dormition* on the smaller copperplate that

Rembrandt's the *Death of the Virgin* evokes early seventeenth-century scientific and Cartesian philosophic developments in two significant ways. First, Rembrandt draws immediate attention to the faint outline of Mary's entire figure, which signifies the momentous separation of her body and soul at her death. By merely rendering the contours of Mary's body with thin strokes of the burin on his plate, Rembrandt stresses her interiority, or soul, as opposed to her earthly physical form. Mary's glowing, almost immaterial figure starkly contrasts with the substantial, weighty figures of her attendants who Rembrandt distinguished from Mary by their heavy modeling and dense crosshatching. In no other pictorial precedent to Rembrandt's print does Mary's body fade into an incorporeal entity, nor has her figural form ever been represented as markedly different from those of her surrounding mourners. Rembrandt's deviation from precedent in regard to Mary's *transitus* from the corporeal to the incorporeal suggests that Rembrandt accorded to his composition, and, in turn, to its meaning, the revolutionary seventeenth-century concepts of the body and soul to which Descartes contributed significantly in his *Discours*.

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he later reused for *The Three Trees*. Hinterding, *Rembrandt as an Etcher: The Practice of Production and Distribution*, 102. See also Colin Campbell, "Rembrandts etsen *Het Sterfbed van Maria en De drie bomen*," 2-33. Bevers argues that if the artist did in fact begin the Dormition on the smaller plate for *The Three Trees* and later abandoned it until he completed the composition on the larger plate, the plate can be used as evidence that he based some of his work on sketches made directly on the metal surface rather than from preparatory drawings. I disagree with this argument. If Rembrandt did initially use the smaller plate for the Dormition, he may have simply decided to enlarge the scene on a different plate, or orient the composition differently for an aesthetically pleasing effect. Bevers, "Rembrandt as an Etcher," 204; Welzel, "The Death of the Virgin," 203-4; Zdanowicz, "Etchings by Rembrandt (cat. nos. 99-122)," 400.

Second, Rembrandt's doctor in the *Death of the Virgin* manifests Cartesianism by capturing and reflecting the recent, elevated role of science, scientists, and medical practitioners that developed from the *Discours*.<sup>459</sup> Descartes' theories about the immortality of the soul, the existence of God, and the distinct, mathematical nature of the corporeal world that he outlined in the *Discours*, in effect, permanently replaced moral and theological approaches with deductive, scientific reasoning. For example, Dutch physicians and new students in medical programs, including Franciscus de Boë, Sylvius, a philosopher and professor of practical medicine at the University of Leiden, modeled their approach to science on Descartes' mechanistic view of nature and the human body.<sup>460</sup> In 1637, the year Descartes published the *Discours*, the first Collegium Medicum opened its doors in Amsterdam. The founding of this institution shows evidence of a strong support for the sciences in the Republic that contributed

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<sup>459</sup> Julie V. Hansen, "Galleries of Life and Death: The Anatomy Lesson in Dutch Art, 1603-1773" (Ph.D. diss., Stanford University, 1996), 75.

<sup>460</sup> Sylvius (1614-72) was a professor at the University from 1658 until his death. Pamela Smith notes that his dissections were incredibly popular among scholars and nobles throughout Europe. Smith's research on Sylvius's Amsterdam house and his large art collection demonstrates the impact of seventeenth-century science and philosophy on his cultural and epistemological ideology that emphasize medicine and the five senses. In particular, the collection of exotica, paintings, and so forth, evoke the interest Sylvius had on the *uncertainty* about the ways in which knowledge can be derived from the senses that was the chief concern of intellectuals, such as Bacon and Descartes. By 1638 Sylvius was living in Leiden where he lectured on William Harvey's theories about blood circulation, which Descartes also studied and admired. According to Smith, Sylvius knew and respected Descartes despite the fact that their theoretical ideas were not in complete agreement. Pamela H. Smith, "Science and Taste: Painting, Passions, and the New Philosophy in Seventeenth-Century Leiden," *Isis* 90, no. 3 (1999): 422-23.

not only to Cartesianism, but also to Rembrandt's print.<sup>461</sup> The regard for educated doctors in seventeenth-century Dutch culture increased so dramatically that some exalted them as god-like. Rudolf M. Dekker has shown that Dutch doctors were perceived as mediators between mortals and the divine realm by virtue of the healing services they offered, which bordered on the magical.<sup>462</sup> Dekker points to the mottos displayed over the doors of the homes of Dr. Tulp and his son-in-law, also a doctor, who lived next door to one another in Amsterdam: "Walk with God," and "Seek Eternal Life."<sup>463</sup> Although Dekker interprets the two maxims as revealing the deep and abiding sense of suspicion that society still held for its doctors, the confident manner of their street-side, public exhibition, I posit, bolsters the new conception of physicians as respectable, moral, and pious practitioners who had the ability to improve the quality of one's life.

The doctor in Rembrandt's print, by virtue of his unexpected role in a religious, apocryphal scene, alludes to the new reverence for the discipline of science over religion that began in the 1630s in the Republic. As already mentioned, no pictorial precedent of the Dormition exists wherein a secular doctor scrutinizes

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<sup>461</sup> According to Frijhoff and Spies, the Amsterdam medical program provided structure and supervision to the medical profession, including those who practiced alternate forms of medicine, such as midwifery. Frijhoff and Spies, *1650: Hard-Won Unity*, 209.

<sup>462</sup> Rudolf M. Dekker, *Humour in Dutch Culture of the Golden Age* (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 121. I am grateful to Prof. Linda Stone-Ferrier for bringing this source to my attention.

<sup>463</sup> The major of Amsterdam, Hans Bontemantel, made a record of these mottos in his notes. Hans Bontemantel, *De regeeringe van Amsterdam soo in 't civiel als crimineel en militaire (1653-1672)*, ed. G. W. Kernkamp (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1897), 491, quoted in Dekker, *Humour in Dutch Culture of the Golden Age*, 2:121.

Mary's body and her state of being. Moreover, the depiction of bona fide physicians in the act of performing essential medical services did not receive serious attention by artists until after Rembrandt produced his large-scale print. Prior to Descartes' *Discours* and Rembrandt's print, sixteenth-century artists ridiculed the premodern, non-scientific barber-surgeons, quacks, charlatans, and toothpullers who provided unethical medical services. For example, Lucas van Leyden's engraving, *The Dentist* (fig. 197), 1523, depicts a poor man wearing tattered clothing who winces from pain during a dental procedure at the same time as a young woman, presumably the dentist's assistant, picks the patient's money pouch, suggesting that the dentist is not to be trusted. The theme's popularity continued into the seventeenth century as evidenced, for example, by Gerrit van Honthorst's two paintings, *The Dentist* and *The Toothpuller* (figs. 198-99), both from 1622.<sup>464</sup>

By the mid-seventeenth century, however, after Rembrandt's *Dormition* print became widely available, the theme of the doctor in Dutch narrative imagery developed into two distinct types. First, the satirical representation of quack doctors

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<sup>464</sup> Hansen remarked that Dutch doctors and their analyses of death signified the fragility and transitory state of the body. The Dutch fascination with death coincided with the rise of anatomical studies; the publication and collecting of anatomical books; and the proliferation of medical programs and anatomical theatres in the Republic. Remarkably, the visual tradition of depicting anatomy studies as a genre was unique in Dutch art. Hansen, "Galleries of Life and Death: The Anatomy Lesson in Dutch Art, 1603-1773," 31, 49, 130. See also Carol Jean Fresia, "Quacksalvers and Barber-Surgeons: Images of Medical Practitioners in 17th-century Dutch Genre Painting" (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1991). On the relationship between the works by Honthorst and Van Leyden, see Franits, *Dutch Seventeenth-Century Genre Painting: Its Stylistic and Thematic Evolution*, 77; J. Richard Judson and Rudolf E.O. Ekkart, *Gerrit van Honthorst, 1592-1656* (Doornspijk: Davaco Publishers, 1999), 211, 213.

remained popular. Comical images of doctors from this period often depicted them advertising their services, performing painful surgery on naive patients while assistants pick their patients' pockets, or tending to sexually abstinent and lovesick maidens, as evidenced in Frans van Mieris's painting *The Doctor's Visit* (fig. 200), 1657.<sup>465</sup> Second, in the spirit of Rembrandt's doctor in the *Death of the Virgin*, the trope of the upright, professional physician in genre imagery emerges as an original subject in Dutch art. Although images of honorable doctors are few in number, as Ger Luijten correctly recognized, several extant prints, drawings, and paintings represent praiseworthy physicians astutely performing medical arts on needy patients while in the company of empathetic spectators.<sup>466</sup> In two examples, Constantijn Daniel van Renesse's print (with a misleading title), *The Quack* (fig. 201), 1651, and Jacob Toorenvliet's painting, *A Surgeon Binding up a Woman's Arm after Bloodletting* (fig. 202), 1666, doctors carefully and sympathetically treat their patients while two attendants sensitively comfort or observe them nearby. Dutch artists had never explored the theme of the moral, principled doctor before the publication of Descartes' *Discours* and the dissemination of Rembrandt's the *Death of the Virgin*, both of which therefore signify a new admiration felt for medicine, empirical science, and mathematics that eventually led the Republic into the modern age.

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<sup>465</sup> For a thorough discussion of the artistic satirization of Dutch doctors in the context of genre imagery that depicts lovesick women suffering from sexual abstinence, see Laurinda S. Dixon, *Perilous Chastity: Women and Illness in Pre-Enlightenment Art and Medicine* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995).

<sup>466</sup> De Jongh and Luijten, *Mirror of Everyday Life: Genreprints in the Netherlands, 1550-1700*, 295-98, cat. no. 60.



Rembrandt's inspiration for interjecting a secular element—a respectable doctor—in the *Death of the Virgin* may derive from his own involvement in the legitimization of the medical profession in the Republic. Rembrandt attended highly celebrated public anatomy lessons, which renowned surgeons led for the first time in the 1630s in the Republic at leading universities in Amsterdam and Leiden.<sup>467</sup> The surgeons conducted the dissections mainly on the cadavers of criminals and animals, structured after Andreas Vesalius's immensely popular manual of the human anatomy, *De humani corporis fabrica*, 1543, of which Rembrandt owned a copy.<sup>468</sup> Rembrandt observed the lessons as part of his preparation for the large group portrait, *The Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Nicolaes Tulp*, 1632, which commemorated the founding of Amsterdam's anatomy theatre, the Anthenaeum Illustre. Descartes recounted in his

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<sup>467</sup> Medical lectures were held at Leiden's *hortus botanicus* (botanical garden) beginning in 1594. They were led by Bernadus Paludanus, a physician and director of the garden. Studies have shown that the rise of interest in medicine, anatomy, and dissections paralleled the growing interest in collecting natural specimens, such as shells, plants, minerals, and insects. Ellinoor Bergvelt and Renée Kistemaker, *De wereld binnen handbereik. Nederlandse kunst- en rariteitenverzamelingen, 1585-1735* (Zwolle and Amsterdam: Waanders Uitgevers and Amsterdams Historisch Museum, 1992); Van Bunge, *From Stevin to Spinoza: An Essay on Philosophy in the Seventeenth-Century Dutch Republic*, 63. Typically, anatomy lessons took place over the course of three to five days, often around Christmas, and were treated as rituals complete with music, candles, incense, banquets, lectures, and parades. The lessons were public, and admission was granted with the purchase of a ticket. Hansen, "Galleries of Life and Death: The Anatomy Lesson in Dutch Art, 1603-1773," 55-56. For Rembrandt and the early modern fascination with the human anatomy, see Martin Kemp, *The Science of Art* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990); Martin Kemp and Marina Wallace, *Spectacular Bodies: The Art and Science of the Human Body from Leonardo to Now* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 2000).

<sup>468</sup> Andreas Vesalius, *De humani corporis fabrica* (Basel: Johannes Oporinus, 1543). Julie Hansen described the theatres as not just gathering places, but also centers of culture and science in the Republic. Hansen, "Galleries of Life and Death: The Anatomy Lesson in Dutch Art, 1603-1773," 56-57.

correspondence that he was present at Dr. Tulp's public lessons, and those led by other surgeons, in order to gain a better understanding of the human body. Descartes' attendance presents the possibility that there he may have met Rembrandt at the lessons, as Jonathan Sawday has posited.<sup>469</sup> Rembrandt and Descartes would have appreciated Dr. Tulp's approach to medicine, which complemented their mutual emphases on science over religion. According to Julie H. Hansen, Dr. Tulp reportedly equated medicine with a lit candle that sheds light on the "darkness of ignorance," the goal of which made "the reality of the body knowable for the exercise of the mind."<sup>470</sup> Rembrandt and Descartes might certainly have crossed paths at one of Dr. Tulp's lessons, although no extant evidence can substantiate this possibility.<sup>471</sup>

Regardless, they both participated in and stimulated an acceptance of scientific

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<sup>469</sup> Descartes' acquaintance, Vipiscus Fortunatus Plempius [Plemp] (1601-71), noted that Descartes lived in the Kalverstraat where the butchers' shops were located in the 1630s in Amsterdam. He bought animal carcasses from the butchers on his street to take home for the purpose of dissection. Plemp was also friend of Dr. Nicolaes Tulp, and attended his public dissections in Amsterdam, as did Rembrandt. Descartes discussed his attendance at anatomy lessons in the Netherlands at great length in his correspondence with friends and fellow intellectuals. Theo Verbeek, Erik-Jan Bos, and Jeroen van den Ven, eds., *The Correspondence of René Descartes, 1643* (Utrecht: Utrecht University, 2003), 287. On Cartesian theories circulating in European intellectual, artistic, and political circles before Descartes published the *Discours*, and their potential relevance to Rembrandt's work, see Jonathan Sawday, *The Body Emblazoned: Dissection and the Human Body in Renaissance Culture* (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), 153. On the *Athenaeum Illustre*, Rembrandt's *Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Tulp*, and the painting's relationship to scientific and medical advancements in Amsterdam, see Hansen, "Galleries of Life and Death: The Anatomy Lesson in Dutch Art, 1603-1773," 28-29, 70. On Descartes' dissections of animals, see his letter to Mersenne dated July 30, 1640 in Charles Adam and Paul Tannery, eds. *Oeuvres de Descartes*. 3:139, 141.

<sup>470</sup> Hansen, "Galleries of Life and Death: The Anatomy Lesson in Dutch Art, 1603-1773," 75.

<sup>471</sup> Baigrie, "Descartes's Scientific Illustrations and 'la grande mécanique de la nature'," 88.

discovery by their involvement in Amsterdam's public anatomy lessons. As J. Lenore Wright recently posited, the timeliness of Rembrandt's acute interest in the human anatomy, surgery and dissections in his work points to the larger philosophical and scientific culture in Amsterdam led by Descartes, of which Rembrandt was an integral part.<sup>472</sup>

Rembrandt's impetus for blatantly modifying the archaic subject of his print, the *Death of the Virgin*, with elements that evoke medicine and the cutting edge Cartesian theories, may also have been inspired by the official opening in 1639 of the new surgeons' guild quarters situated in the St. Anthony Weighing House in Amsterdam. As part of the guild's opening celebrations, Rembrandt's painting, *The Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Nicolaes Tulp*, which had been displayed in the temporary location of the surgeons' guild at the former St. Margaret's Church, moved to the new permanent headquarters for the guild.<sup>473</sup> Moreover, two points of striking visual similarity between Rembrandt's group portrait of Dr. Tulp performing a dissection on a cadaver's arm and the composition of the *Death of the Virgin* indicate a strong, perhaps causal, relationship between the two pictures. First, in the Tulp painting, the doctor stands behind the midsection of the cadaver while making a connection to its arm in the same manner as does the doctor in Rembrandt's Dormition print. Second, the cadaver lies at an oblique angle to the picture plane in the Tulp painting with his

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<sup>472</sup> J. Lenore Wright, "Reading Rembrandt: Influence of Cartesian Dualism on Dutch Art," *History of European Ideas* 33, no. 3 (2007): 275-91.

<sup>473</sup> Anatomy lessons in Amsterdam in 1619 through 1639 were held in remodeled rooms in St. Margaret's Church. The new location for the guild included eight rows of galleries used for anatomy demonstrations. Hansen, "Galleries of Life and Death: The Anatomy Lesson in Dutch Art, 1603-1773," 31, 50.

head directed to the left side of the canvas at the same angle at which Rembrandt placed Mary's body in the Dormition print. The visual similarities between the two images present the likelihood that Rembrandt looked to his own painting of Tulp—a respectable doctor performing an act of modern science, whom Descartes also held in high regard—for the form and content of his image of Mary's death.

### **Rembrandt's Proximity to Descartes and Cartesianism**

While no tangible evidence yet exists that Rembrandt knew Descartes personally, we can argue with virtual certainty that by 1639 he was familiar with Cartesianism.<sup>474</sup> Both Rembrandt and Descartes moved to Amsterdam in the early

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<sup>474</sup> We do not know if Rembrandt owned a copy of Descartes' *Discours*, but we do know that he owned twenty-two books at the time his possessions were inventoried in 1656. We also know that Jan Six owned a copy of Descartes' treatise. Rembrandt could have been acquainted with this copy of the book during one of his visits to Six's renowned library that he made as late as 1647 when Rembrandt sketched Six in this room. Amy Golahny, *Rembrandt's Reading: The Artist's Bookshelf of Ancient Poetry and History* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2003), 31. Surprisingly, only a few scholars have made connections between Rembrandt and Descartes. In addition to Sawday and Wright, as previously mentioned, Svetlana Alpers also commented on the shared interests of Descartes and Rembrandt. Alpers demonstrated that Rembrandt, like Descartes, expressed keen interest in the "visible properties" of "look and texture" and that the surface quality of his paintings evokes Descartes' theories on the act of seeing that the philosopher outlined in the *Discours* essay, "La Dioptrique." Alpers posited that the act of touch is lured by the act of seeing, or that at least the two are similar to one another. Alpers notes that in "La Dioptrique," Descartes relates the eye to light and the hand to a stick in that they both facilitate sight. She writes, "Rembrandt represents touch as the embodiment of sight: seeing done with hands instead of with Descartes's sticks." She goes on to state, "One does not assume that Rembrandt espoused any particular theory of vision. But his paint surface, as well as the subject of some works, shows that he shared an interest in blindness and in touch with those pursuing natural knowledge and in some measure for the same paradoxical reason—as a condition of attending to the nature of seeing." Alpers, *Rembrandt's Enterprise: The Studio and*

1630s where they socialized with many of the same friends, colleagues, and associates.<sup>475</sup> Only several degrees separated Rembrandt and Descartes in more than one acquaintanceship. For example, Rembrandt knew Dr. Tulp, of course, when he painted him at the helm of an anatomy lesson. In turn, Dr. Tulp was acquainted with Vopiscus Fortunatus Plempius, nicknamed Plemp, who probably attended Dr. Tulp's dissection in 1632 where he might have seen Rembrandt. Finally, Plemp and

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*the Market*, 22, 25, 128 n. 18. Smith made the convincing argument that certain artists, particularly the Leiden *fijnschilders*, such as Gerrit Dou, appealed to Cartesian supporters and possibly vice versa because they "demonstrated their ability to follow nature and as such were proof of the consummate artisanship that they valued above all else." Smith, "Science and Taste: Painting, Passions, and the New Philosophy in Seventeenth-Century Leiden," 457. For Descartes' broad influence on seventeenth-century Dutch artists and the genre of naturalistic landscape painting, see Erik Larsen, "Descartes and the Rise of Naturalistic Landscape Painting in 17th Century Holland," *Art Journal* 24 (1964): 12-17. In a comparison of Vermeer's paintings with Descartes' theoretical treatises, Harriet Stone argues that the Dutch artists' fascination with the natural world and the notion of objecthood parallels the philosopher's work on optics and the systematic pursuit of knowledge. Harriet Stone, *Tables of Knowledge: Descartes in Vermeer's Studio* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2006). For other studies that compare the work of Descartes and Vermeer, see Christopher Braider, "The Denuded Muse: The Unmasking of Point of View in the Cartesian *Cogito* and Vermeer's *The Art of Painting*," *Poetics Today* 10 (1989): 173-203; Jonathan Crary, *Techniques of the Observer: On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1999); Bryan Jay Wolf, *Vermeer and the Invention of Seeing* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001).

<sup>475</sup> Rembrandt and Descartes lived in Amsterdam at the same time. Rembrandt moved from Leiden where he was born to Amsterdam in 1631. Descartes left his native France in 1628 to live in the Netherlands. He resided in Amsterdam by 1630 or 1631 until 1632, and returned in 1633 before he left again in 1635. For a colorful biography of Rembrandt and an analysis of the professional significance of the artist's move to Amsterdam, see Schama, *Rembrandt's Eyes*, 322-32. On Descartes' early biography in Amsterdam, see Gaukroger, *Descartes: An Intellectual Biography*, 225.

Descartes were close friends and correspondents about medicine; Plemp even received three copies of the *Discours* from Descartes soon after it was printed.<sup>476</sup>

Descartes' theories on duality, although not formally published in the *Discours* until 1637, circulated widely among Dutch intellectuals, including Descartes' close friend, confidante, and proofreader of the *Discours*, Constantijn Huygens, secretary to the Republic's *stadholder*, Frederik Hendrik. In turn, Huygens also knew Rembrandt.<sup>477</sup> Descartes looked to Huygens for an intellectual alliance as well as physical protection from enemies he made in the Netherlands as a result of publishing his controversial theories in the *Discours*.<sup>478</sup> Descartes took a personal interest in the education of Huygens's son Christiaan who would prove to be one of

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<sup>476</sup> Tom Sorell, *Descartes* (Aldershot, England and Brookfield, VT: Ashgate, 1999), 42; Verbeek, Bos, and Ven, eds., *The Correspondence of René Descartes, 1643*, 287.

<sup>477</sup> Descartes' earliest letters regarding theories that would eventually become a part of the *Discours* date from 1630, and were exchanged with his friend, Marin Mersenne, a priest in France. Mersenne also wrote letters to others in the Netherlands. Huygens corresponded with Descartes in Latin, French, and Dutch. Seymour Slive, "Art Historians and Art Critics-II, Huygens on Rembrandt," *The Burlington Magazine* 94, no. 594 (September 1952): 262. Descartes shared an early proof of the *Discours* with Huygens for comments in 1636 before Descartes sent them to Mersenne on January 6, 1637. Gaukroger, *Descartes: An Intellectual Biography*, 322.

<sup>478</sup> Gaukroger elaborates on Huygens's significance for Descartes stating, "More important, [Huygens] was someone of real influence who could offer some degree of protection to Descartes, although the relationship was never one of patron and client. They had a warm personal friendship, and Descartes took an interest in the education of his son Christiaan, who was to become one of the greatest natural philosophers and mathematicians of the seventeenth century." Gaukroger, *Descartes: An Intellectual Biography*, 476. Israel notes that Descartes sought protection from the *stadholder* through Huygens in 1643 for himself and his friend Regius after a series of volatile debates on Cartesianism that took place in Utrecht between 1639 and 1643. Israel, *The Dutch Republic: Its Rise, Greatness, and Fall, 1477-1806*, 585.

the most important scientists in Dutch history and who has also been described as the “most brilliant ‘Cartesian’ of the day.”<sup>479</sup>

Huygens first met Rembrandt in 1629 at his studio in Leiden, and in 1633 he wrote a harshly critical poem about one of the artist’s paintings.<sup>480</sup> A year earlier, in 1632, the same year that Huygens met Descartes, Rembrandt painted a portrait of Huygens’s older brother Maurits, secretary to the State Council.<sup>481</sup> During these pivotal years for Rembrandt and Descartes, Huygens negotiated with Rembrandt over a major commission of five paintings of the Passion for the *stadholder*, which Rembrandt completed in 1639.<sup>482</sup> In 1639, Rembrandt sent five among his seven extant letters to Huygens regarding the Passion commission, which demonstrates the

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<sup>479</sup> Van Bunge, *From Stevin to Spinoza: An Essay on Philosophy in the Seventeenth-Century Dutch Republic*, 57.

<sup>480</sup> Huygens met Rembrandt in Leiden, mainly to see the work of his fellow painter Jan Lievens. Huygens’s poem criticized the portrait that Rembrandt made of Jacques de Gheyn III, which indicates the familiarity Huygens and Rembrandt had with one another in those years. Schama, *Rembrandt’s Eyes*, 23, 29, 707 n. 51; Van Rijn, Strauss, and Meulen, *The Rembrandt Documents*, 9; Gary Schwartz, *Rembrandt: His Life, His Paintings* (London and New York: Penguin Books, 1991), 97.

<sup>481</sup> Slive remarks that Huygens might also have assisted Rembrandt in receiving the commission to paint portraits of the *stadholder* and his wife, Amalia van Solms. Slive, “Art Historians and Art Critics-II, Huygens on Rembrandt,” 262-63. Huygens maintained his friendship with Descartes mostly through correspondence, which became increasingly frequent by 1635. Stephen Gaukroger writes, “Descartes reserved his most personal correspondence for Huygens, who acted as a kind of confessor to him.” Gaukroger, “Descartes: Methodology,” 293.

<sup>482</sup> Rembrandt’s Passion cycle of paintings for the *stadholder* included: the *Entombment*, *Resurrection*, *Ascension*, *Elevation*, and *Descent*. Gerson posits that Huygens may have recommended Rembrandt to the *stadholder* for the commission because Huygens oversaw the decoration of the Orange Hall from 1648 until 1650. Horst Gerson, *Seven Letters*, trans. Yda D. Ovink (The Hague: L. J. C. Boucher, 1961), 8.

close ties they maintained.<sup>483</sup> Rembrandt's correspondence also reveals that the artist bestowed upon Huygens at least two gifts of art, indicating that the artist may have conceived of and produced additional non-commissioned works specifically for Huygens. In a letter by Rembrandt to Huygens about one of the gifts he sent in the 1630s, he wrote that he intended it "as a token of gratitude . . . which you will prize in your house."<sup>484</sup> Rembrandt's letters present the possibility that his desire to gratify Huygens may have also led the artist to produce works like the *Death of the Virgin* that would appeal not only to Huygens's aesthetic style, but also to his personal and intellectual pursuits, such as the revolutionary theories of his close friend, Descartes.

Evidence suggests that Huygens may have conveyed to Rembrandt the high regard he held for Descartes, which in turn could have influenced the artist to etch the *Death of the Virgin* to please Huygens. In the same year, Huygens corresponded with at least one person about Descartes outside the immediate circle of contacts he shared with the philosopher. Stephen Gaukroger posits that Huygens probably introduced Descartes to Joan Albert Ban, a Catholic priest from Haarlem and a musical theorist. Gaukroger notes that Ban wrote to Huygens on 15 October 1639 recounting that he

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<sup>483</sup> All of Rembrandt's extant correspondence is reproduced and translated in Van Rijn, Strauss, and Meulen, *The Rembrandt Documents*.

<sup>484</sup> Rembrandt's letter to Huygens is dated 3 January 1639. In another letter, probably regarding the *Blinding of Samson*, Rembrandt wrote to Huygens that he was giving him this painting "because it is the first memento which I offer you, Sir." Ibid., 161, 167. This was not the first time that Rembrandt showered Huygens with gifts of appreciation. In 1636, in the first extant letter we have by Rembrandt, the artist notes that he is giving Huygens "as a token of my humble favour," something of his recent work. Gerson posits that this work refers to several etchings. Gerson, *Seven Letters*, 22.



spent “half a day talking about music with the hero Descartes.”<sup>485</sup> Ban’s letter indicates the positive reception Descartes enjoyed in the Republic, and the candid tone of Ban’s writing implies that Huygens probably agreed with him in his glowing assessment of Descartes as a “hero.” We can surmise that Huygens, therefore, may have expressed his high regard for Descartes to others he knew, such as Rembrandt, and that they, in turn, may have taken a keener interest in Descartes.

### **The Spread of Cartesian Dualism by 1639 in the Dutch Republic**

If Huygens did not introduce Rembrandt to Cartesianism in the years leading up to the *Death of the Virgin*, Rembrandt certainly would have been aware of Descartes because of the excitement his theories aroused in Dutch academic circles. Henricus Reneri, an admirer of Descartes and the first professor of natural philosophy at the University of Utrecht, began teaching Descartes’ epistemological method by 1635 and quickly found avid followers of Cartesian duality amongst his students.<sup>486</sup> In 1639, Descartes’ close friend Reneri died. Ironically, his eulogy celebrated the life of Descartes and Cartesian dualism more than the legacy left by Reneri. Anton Aemelius, a friend of Reneri and a professor of history at the University of Utrecht,

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<sup>485</sup> Gaukroger, *Descartes: An Intellectual Biography*, 333.

<sup>486</sup> Descartes knew Reneri in Deventer. Descartes moved to the city by 1632, and Reneri served as the chair of philosophy there at the Deventer Athenaeum. Reneri was made chair of the Utrecht Athenaeum in 1634; in the following year Descartes moved to Utrecht to join Reneri so they could easily discuss the tenets of Cartesian philosophy. Van Bunge, *From Stevin to Spinoza: An Essay on Philosophy in the Seventeenth-Century Dutch Republic*, 34. On the relationship between Descartes and Reneri, see Charles Adam and Paul Tannery, eds., *Oeuvres de Descartes*, 2:586; Gaukroger, *Descartes: An Intellectual Biography*, 295, 322.

delivered the funeral oration, which according to Gaukroger “extolled the virtues of Cartesian natural philosophy over the philosophies of the traditional professors at Utrecht.”<sup>487</sup> Aemelius proclaimed in his oration: “You Cartesius, mighty Atlas, who all alone support the wide heavens, not with high-held shoulders, but with the strong arguments of your divine understanding.”<sup>488</sup> In the same critical year, Hendrik LeRoy, referred to as Henricus Regius, a professor of physics at the University of Utrecht and another admirer of Descartes, officially resumed Renieri’s Cartesian instruction until 1642, when authorities at Dutch universities officially condemned the epistemological method.<sup>489</sup> Writing on Descartes’ impact at the University of Utrecht, Wiep van Bunge remarked “by the early 1640s, the entire academic community of Utrecht must have been aware of Descartes’ presence.”<sup>490</sup>

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<sup>487</sup> Gaukroger, *Descartes: An Intellectual Biography*, 353. Descartes’ seventeenth-century biographer, Adrien Baillet, commented that the University of Utrecht was “born Cartesian” because Renieri combined his lectures with Descartes’ theories before they were even published. Adrien Baillet, *Vie de Monsieur Descartes* (Paris: Daniel Horthemels, 1691), 2:2, quoted in Van Bunge, *From Stevin to Spinoza: An Essay on Philosophy in the Seventeenth-Century Dutch Republic*, 34-35. For Descartes’ influence on Renieri, see also Theo Verbeek, Erik-Jan Bos, and Paul Schuurman, *Une université pas encore corrompu: Descartes et les premières années de l’Université d’Utrecht, Descartes en de eerste jaren van de Utrechtse Universiteit* (Utrecht: Universiteit Utrecht, 1993), 11.

<sup>488</sup> René Descartes, *Verantwoordingh van Renatus Descartes aen d’achtbare overigheid van Uitrecht*, ed. Erik-Jan Bos (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1996), 5-6.

<sup>489</sup> Van Bunge, *From Stevin to Spinoza: An Essay on Philosophy in the Seventeenth-Century Dutch Republic*, 37; Gaukroger, *Descartes: An Intellectual Biography*, 295, 322. On the centrality of Cartesianism to Dutch university curriculum in the 1660s, see Gaukroger, *Descartes: An Intellectual Biography*, 225, 352-53; Israel, *The Dutch Republic: Its Rise, Greatness, and Fall, 1477-1806*, 584.

<sup>490</sup> Van Bunge, *From Stevin to Spinoza: An Essay on Philosophy in the Seventeenth-Century Dutch Republic*, 37.

The decisive events of 1639 continued with a series of volatile public debates held at the University of Utrecht on the topic of Cartesian duality, suggesting the awareness of Cartesianism felt by those outside the academic world, such as Rembrandt and his patrons.<sup>491</sup> A rift developed between the orthodox Calvinists who upheld the Aristotelian, scholastic world-view, and Cartesians who argued for a mathematical perspective in the sciences, medicine, and theology. Rembrandt evokes this precise conflict between the Aristotelians and Cartesians in the *Death of the Virgin* by insertion of a doctor in a religious scene lacking the liturgical and devotional objects associated with both Catholic and Protestant confessions.<sup>492</sup>

The contentious debates on Cartesianism in the Republic, which culminated in what Gaukroger described as a “long-drawn-out public brawl,” set Descartes and his followers in direct opposition to Gijsbertus Voetius, a professor of theology and a Counter-Remonstrant minister at the University of Utrecht.<sup>493</sup> The debates centered on Descartes’ expression of doubt, perceived by his critics as atheistic, which he used as a theoretical basis for attaining scientific knowledge in the *Discours*. In Rembrandt’s print, the doctor attending to Mary interrupts the religiosity and reliance

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<sup>491</sup> On Descartes’ response to objections he received about the *Discours*, see Ariew and Grene, eds., *Descartes and His Contemporaries: Meditations, Objections, and Replies*, 11. On Descartes’ conflicts with conservatives at the University of Utrecht, see Frijhoff and Spies, *1650: Hard-Won Unity*; McGahagan, “Cartesianism in the Netherlands, 1639-1676: The New Science and the Calvinist Counter-Reformation”; Van Ruler, *The Crisis of Causality: Voetius and Descartes on God, Nature, and Change*; Theo Verbeek, “Regius’s Fundamenta Physices,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 55, no. 4 (1994): 533.

<sup>492</sup> Israel, *Radical Enlightenment: Philosophy and the Making of Modernity, 1650-1750*, 25. See also Frijhoff and Spies, *1650: Hard-Won Unity*, 292.

<sup>493</sup> Gaukroger, *Descartes: An Intellectual Biography*, 352.

on faith in the scene with scientific questions surrounding Mary's real death and apocryphal resurrection, which smacks of Descartes' *cogito*. Descartes' critics assailed Cartesian theories as a direct condemnation of Aristotelianism that had served as the chief methodological criterion of science and philosophy at all European universities until the introduction of Cartesianism in the mid 1630s.<sup>494</sup> Voetius regarded Descartes and his followers, including Regius, as anti-Aristotelians whose Copernicanism and unconscionable rejection of substantial forms in nature contradicted Scripture.<sup>495</sup> The public outcry against Descartes and his theories could have easily influenced Rembrandt and provided him inspiration to deviate radically from the pictorial conventions of Mary's death.

Current scholars regard Cartesian theories and the debates surrounding them as the cause for the Republic's development as the first relatively modern society. Rembrandt evokes modernity in his Dormition print by juxtaposing the realms of science and religion. By mid-century, the Republic's insistence on critical thinking, debate, and discussion characterize the very tenets of modernity—qualities that all stem from its introduction to Cartesianism, mind/body duality, and Descartes' *cogito* that began to spread throughout the country.

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<sup>494</sup> Gaukroger notes that Cartesianism became a central element in Dutch universities by the 1660s. *Ibid.*, 225.

<sup>495</sup> Van Bunge, *From Stevin to Spinoza: An Essay on Philosophy in the Seventeenth-Century Dutch Republic*, 37-38; J. A. van Ruler, *The Crisis of Causality: Voetius and Descartes on God, Nature, and Change* (Leiden and New York: E. J. Brill, 1995), 9; Martinus Schoock et al., *La Querelle d'Utrecht: René Descartes et Martin Schoock* (Paris: Impressions nouvelles, 1988), 105-15.

Jonathan Israel demonstrated that the tremendous effect of Descartes' theories on the Republic altered not only its academic and theological circles, but also its politics at the city and national levels.<sup>496</sup> Bunge posited that Cartesianism's footprint on the Republic climaxed by mid-century as "*the modern philosophy*" taught at Dutch universities.<sup>497</sup> Frijhoff and Spies underscored the significance of Cartesianism in the early seventeenth century, writing:

A philosophical revolution had indeed taken place within the Dutch universities, and the importance of this breakthrough should not be underestimated. For not only did Cartesianism become the dominant university philosophy in the following decades; outside the walls of the academy it also provided a frame of reference for both the rise of modern science and the development of a theological-political debate on the nature and destiny of the Republic of the United Dutch Provinces.<sup>498</sup>

Thus, the transformative effect of Cartesianism on the whole of the Republic, which gained considerable momentum in 1639, effectively dissolved the boundaries between Catholics and Protestants.

Rembrandt produced the *Death of the Virgin* at the beginning of a tumultuous period for intellectuals in the Dutch Republic as the long-held Scholastic Aristotelian and Christian foundation of Western civilization gave way to Cartesianism.<sup>499</sup> The

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<sup>496</sup> Israel, *The Dutch Republic: Its Rise, Greatness, and Fall, 1477-1806*, 585.

<sup>497</sup> Van Bunge, *From Stevin to Spinoza: An Essay on Philosophy in the Seventeenth-Century Dutch Republic*, 54.

<sup>498</sup> Frijhoff and Spies, *1650: Hard-Won Unity*, 283.

<sup>499</sup> Israel, *The Dutch Republic: Its Rise, Greatness, and Fall, 1477-1806*, 583-85. Israel described Cartesianism as a philosophy opposed to the "essentially magical, Aristotelian, 'pre-scientific' view of the world which had everywhere prevailed hitherto and worked to supplant it, projecting a rigorous mechanism which, in the eyes of adversaries, inevitably entailed the subordination of theology and Church authority to concepts rooted in a mathematically grounded philosophical reason—albeit most 'Cartesians' of the 1650s and 1660s never intended to undermine

combination of sacred and secular issues in the *Death of the Virgin* evokes both the complex religious climate of the Dutch Republic, and also the growing sense of interiority resulting from both the Reformation and a Cartesian awareness of the self. Mary's figural representation articulates the new scientific and Cartesian epistemology that the primacy of the mind/soul reigns over the physicality of the body. Mary's loss of corporeality thus embodies the singularity of her interiority, or soul, over her body. In turn, the doctor presiding over the dramatic spectacle signifies reason, scientific curiosity, and the spirit of rationalism, both in Rembrandt's composition and in the context of the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic.

The seeming contradiction that remains in the *Death of the Virgin* between the artist's choice of a pre-Reformation, that is, Roman Catholic, theme and his unprecedented iconographic treatment of the theme reflects the very conflicts inherent in modernity between society's demand for progress and its slow departure from a premodern *mentalité*. Rembrandt's print therefore reveals the gradual transformation into modernity evident in the early seventeenth century. The *Death of the Virgin* engages in and manifests particular theological, liturgical, scientific, and philosophic issues that draw the viewer's attention toward secularism and away from the traditionally absolute perspective on Marian devotion and dying rituals that existed

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theology's hegemony or weaken the sway of the churches to anything like the extent which rapidly resulted." Israel, *Radical Enlightenment: Philosophy and the Making of Modernity, 1650-1750*, 14. On Descartes' role as one of the "inaugurators" of modernity, see also Cottingham, "Descartes: Metaphysics and the Philosophy of Mind," 201; Verbeek, *Descartes and the Dutch: Early Reactions to Cartesian Philosophy, 1637-1650*.

within the confines of Roman Catholicism or Calvinism in the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic.

## CONCLUSION

The prints examined as case studies in the preceding chapters only begin to shed light on the vast quantity of extant seventeenth-century Dutch Marian images and the theological issues they raise about religious pluralism in the post-Reformation Dutch Republic. Much is left to be uncovered about the Marian iconographic themes and her manifestations in visual and material culture, and literature, including sermons, catechisms, and songs from the Republic. The prints' stunning aesthetic qualities and iconographic complexity, at the very least, stimulate our interest in further investigations of the extensive repositories of Dutch Marian art in galleries and museums worldwide. By calling attention to Mary's depiction in the form of tangible, visible prints, a clearer picture of her role in Dutch culture begins to emerge.

Yet this research also signals a curious issue about Mary in seventeenth-century Dutch culture. In many ways, we can interpret Mary as a widespread, public secret of the post-Reformation Republic. For the anthropologist Michael Taussig, the "public secret," is a kind of powerful knowledge that society maintains about itself, but is sometimes difficult to understand or convey to others.<sup>500</sup> Our social institutions, he argues, are formed by this shared, privileged knowledge, which society must

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<sup>500</sup> Taussig constructed his theory of the "public secret" from his ethnographic research on a range of disparate topics, such as magic, shaman, secluded societies, rituals, masks, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Michael T. Taussig, *Defacement: Public Secrecy and the Labor of the Negative* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), 2. I am grateful to Elizabeth Adan for bringing this source to my attention.



protect and conceal in order to instill value and legitimacy in the secret.<sup>501</sup> This dissertation has brought to light a similar paradox about Mary in Dutch art and religion. Pious, Marian prints provide historical evidence of her popularity as a devotional figure, but this dissertation has shown that Catholics and Calvinists were inhibited from openly venerating her in their everyday lives.

Although prints of Mary circulated widely throughout the Republic, Catholics were forbidden from publicly venerating her. Catholics who remained in the Republic after the Reformation subjected themselves to the sanctions by the ruling Calvinist authorities. Catholics worshipped privately, in “secret” *schuilkerken*. Only a relatively small minority of people saw the works of art on display in those places of worship and in the Catholics’ private homes. Pilgrims still conducted processions to sacred Marian shrines after the Reformation, but usually did so under the cover of darkness. At the same time that Calvinists posted placards and issued ordinances against the public displays of Catholicism, including worship at Marian shrines, many still venerated Mary, such as the Calvinist predicant Willem Sluiter. Although the Protestant Reformed Church held control of the St. Bavo Church in Haarlem after iconoclasm, as we have seen, Calvinist celebrants preserved their altar to the Virgin and other reminders of her in sculpture and dedications. Thus, we can consider Mary as a public secret that the Dutch shared, perhaps in response to the strain brought on by the Reformation’s religious reorganization and dismantling of Roman Catholicism’s ecclesiastical hegemony in the Republic.

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<sup>501</sup> Ibid., 2-3.

As a public secret, Mary mediated among three distinct realms of seventeenth-century Dutch culture: the Catholic confession, the Protestant confession, and the intellectual sphere led by doctors and philosophers, including René Descartes, Nicolaes Tulp, and Baruch Spinoza. As Jonathan Israel has argued, the burgeoning Scientific Revolution in the Republic, to which these figures made major contributions, instigated in the Radical Enlightenment the shift away from the doctrines and dogmas of Christian religiosity.<sup>502</sup> The paradox that surfaces in this period between a sense of nostalgia for a pre-Reformation, idyllic culture, and the desire for progress and autonomy in modernity is evoked in the representation of Mary in Dutch prints. Over the course of the late sixteenth through the mid-seventeenth century, artists portrayed Mary in both her conventional Roman Catholic depiction as a celestial figure, and as a humble, earthly, Dutch Everywoman. Thus, the dual nature of Mary in Dutch images as a symbol of both the sacred and secular—the premodern and modern—conveys the inherent conflict between tradition and progress.

This dissertation posits that Dutch Marian images evoke a gradual cultural inclination toward modernity. The prints cohesively relate to contemporary theological doctrines and devotional practices, the New Philosophy of Cartesianism and the advancements of the Scientific Revolution, and ideologies about private, domestic conduct, child rearing, and familial bonds. The dichotomy of preservation and adaptation presented by the various types of Marian images in this dissertation

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<sup>502</sup> Israel, *Radical Enlightenment: Philosophy and the Making of Modernity, 1650-1750*.

suggests post-Reformation society's strong desire to control the past by perpetuating Roman Catholic iconography and traditions while at the same time advancing into modernity by embracing a scientific worldview.

The preservation of the pre-Reformation Roman Catholic past for some Dutch worshippers required a symbol or exemplar like Mary that would be easily identifiable and whose meaning as inherently Catholic would be clearly understood. Mary functioned as an ideal metaphor for the past because she was at the center of contentious theological debates about Catholicism for Protestants, especially Calvinists, and she signified a culture bound to religiosity that contradicted new findings in science. Remembrance of the pre-Reformation Catholic heritage that defined some of the Dutch living in the Northern Netherlands could reasonably occur visually through Mary's representation in art. The sociologist Paul Connerton argues, for example, that memory is collective, and is not an individual ability. He posits that collective memory is produced through the body, which performs the act of recollection through pose, gesture, and other ritualistic movements.<sup>503</sup> Using Connerton's theory may allow us to interpret Mary's corporeal representation in post-Reformation Dutch art as a means for Catholics and Calvinists to protect the root of their cultural identity that was connected to Roman Catholicism.

As we have seen, seventeenth-century Dutch Catholics remembered and revered Mary through pilgrimage processions at the site of the former sacred shrine in Heiloo by walking, kneeling, and praying with their hands clasped together. In a

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<sup>503</sup> Paul Connerton, *How Societies Remember* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 7.

different type of bodily memory, Catholic and Protestant viewers of Marian prints could also retain their pre-Reformation religious past by meditating from different points of view upon the immediately recognizable pose, gesture, and physicality of the Virgin's body. Through her identifiable roles as a mother in the context of the Holy Family, or in the scenes from her life and death, Marian imagery encouraged an array of Dutch viewers to reminisce by contemplating her physical form that they would have readily associated with her likeness in pre-Reformation art.

For these reasons, the images discussed in this dissertation, each of which I carefully selected as a representation of an innovative treatment of Marian iconography, date from the late sixteenth to the mid-seventeenth centuries. Dutch artists continued to produce images of Mary in the second half of the seventeenth century and beyond, to be sure, but their portrayal of her became increasingly derivative of conventional pictorial models from the sixteenth and the first half of the seventeenth centuries. Artists also generally limited themselves in the second half of the seventeenth century to fewer Marian themes, such as the Holy Family, the Annunciation, the Adoration of the Shepherds, and the Flight into Egypt. Adriaen van der Werff's *Flight into Egypt* (fig. 203), 1710, for example, relies upon the canonical Gospels that Dutch artists explored in the previous centuries. In Van der Werff's painting, Mary and Joseph wear simple robes as they walk through a rustic, Italianate landscape in front of a Doric-Order ruin. The nondescript quality of the clothing, the outdoor setting of the scene, and the ancient architecture with which Van der Werff juxtaposes the figures evoke the earlier models provided by Goltzius and others. Van

der Werff's painting suggests the sustained interest in Marian devotional imagery long after the Reformation in the Republic. It also indicates, however, the diminished desire of artists to situate Mary within a specific, Netherlandish setting and in the garb of a contemporaneous Dutch woman, as had artists, such as Rembrandt, in the first half of the seventeenth century. We can surmise, then, that as the tumult of the Reformation waned in the Republic, so too did Mary as a pictorial and devotional embodiment of the period's dramatic religious and cultural transformation.

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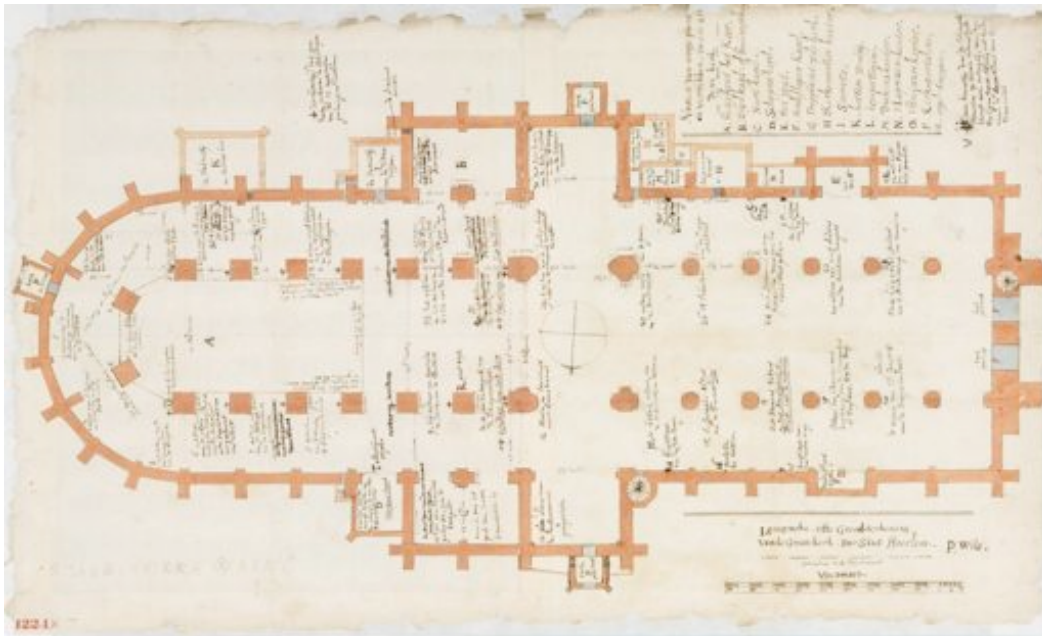


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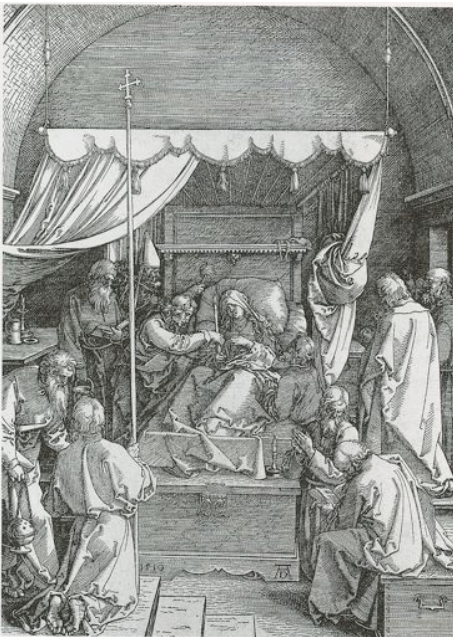


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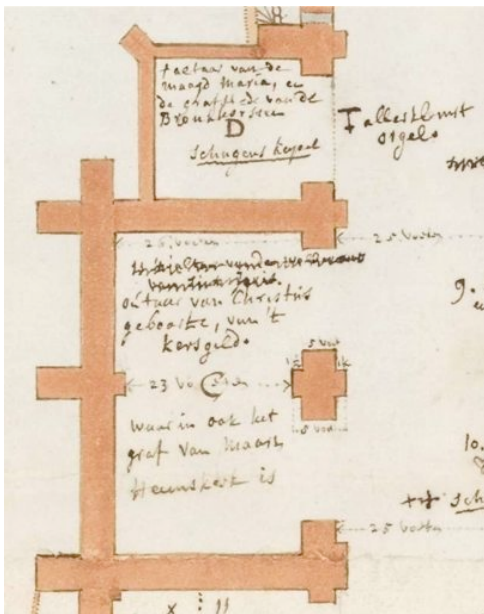


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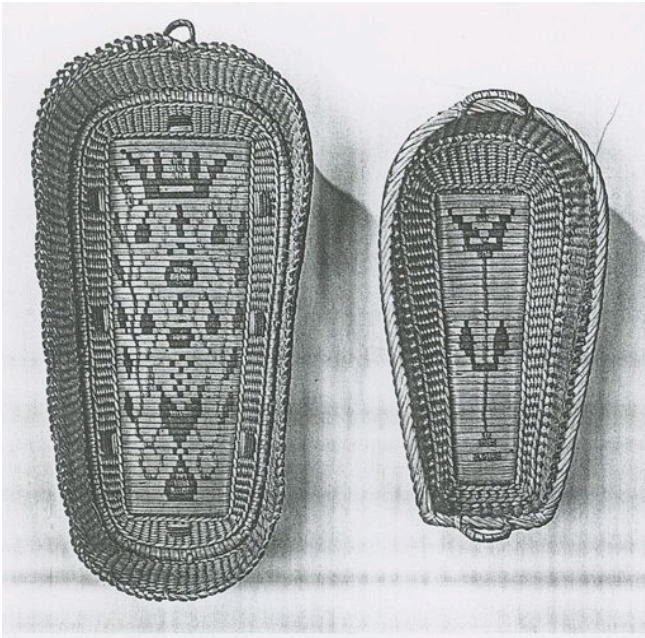


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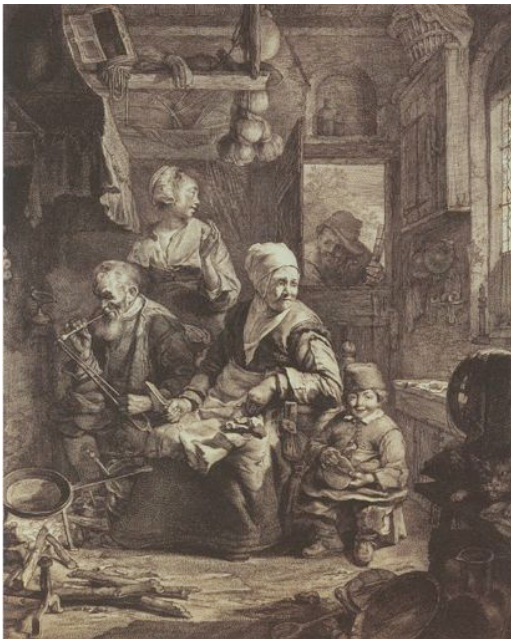


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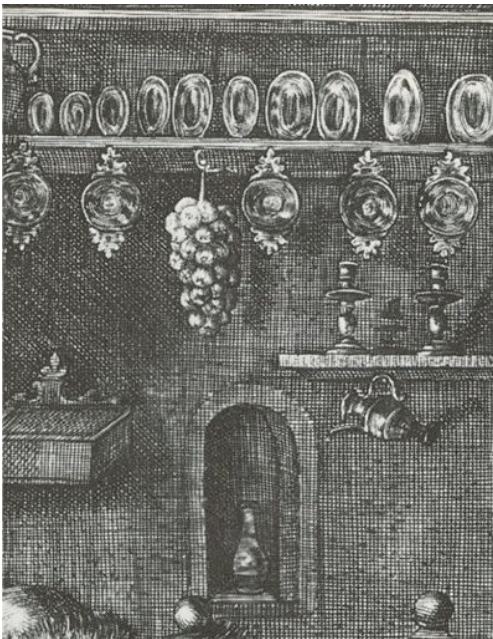


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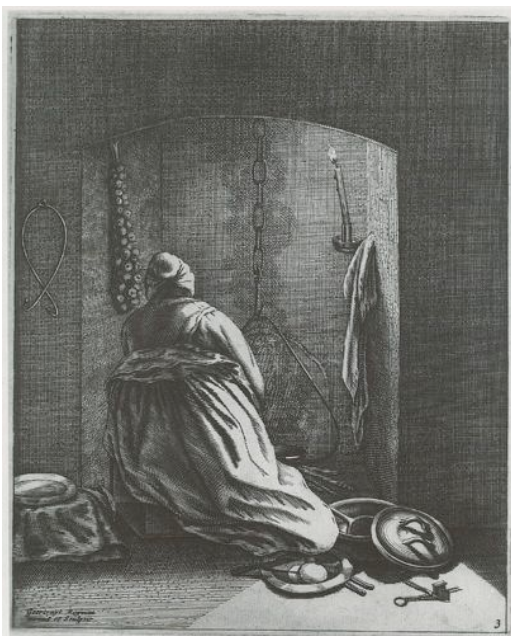


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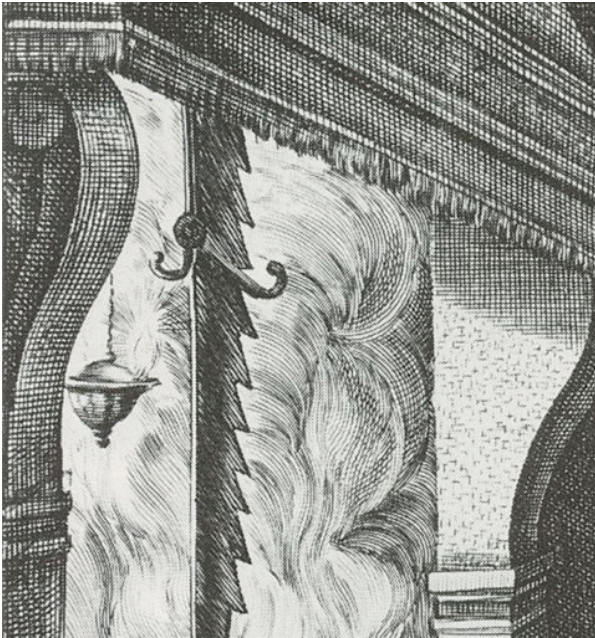


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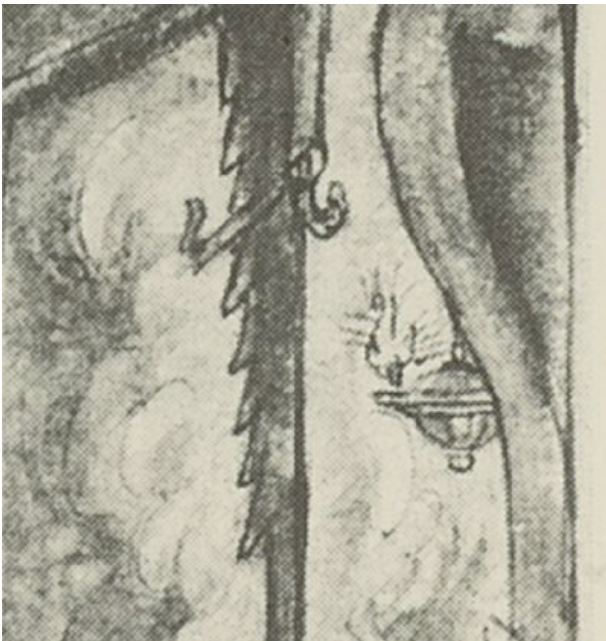


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Figure 97. Rembrandt, *A Woman Seated in a Four-Poster Bed (Saskia?)*, ca. 1638. Pen and brush in brown ink and white paint on paper. Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet.



Figure 98. Adriaen van Ostade, *A Family at the Hearth*, ca. 1647-55. Black chalk, pen and brown ink, and gray wash on paper. Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet.





Figure 99. Willem van de Passe after Adriaen van de Venne, *This Body, What is it, but Stink and Dung?*, Emblem III in Johan de Brune, *Emblemata of Zinne-Werck* (Emblems or Meaning-Work) (Amsterdam, 1624). Engraving. Boston, Houghton Library, Harvard University.



Figure 100. Frontispiece from Petrus Wittewrongel, *Oeconomia Christiana ofte Christelicke huys-houdinghe* (Oeconomia Christiana or the Christian Household) (Amsterdam, 1661). Amsterdam, Universiteits-Bibliotheek Amsterdam.



Figure 101. Gijsbert Sibilla, *A Service at the Church of St. Laurence in Weesp*, ca. 1635. Oil on canvas. Utrecht, Museum Catharijneconvent.



Figure 102. Jacques de Gheyn after Abraham Bloemaert, *St. Joseph with Carpenter's Tools* (left), and the *Virgin and Child* (right), ca. 1590-95. Engraving, H. 466 and H. 465. Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet.



Figure 103. Hendrick Bloemaert, *Virgin and Child* (left), *St. Joseph* (right). Oil on panel. The Hague, Grote Kerk (St. Jacobus Kerk).



Figure 104. Abraham Bloemaert, *Rest on the Flight into Egypt*, 1632. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum.





Figure 105. Rembrandt, *The Holy Family*, ca. 1632. Etching, H. 92. Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet.



Figure 106. Rembrandt, *The Holy Family*, 1645. Oil on canvas. St. Petersburg, State Hermitage Museum.



Figure 107. Adriaen van Ostade, *The Pater Familias*, 1648. Etching, B. 33. Private collection.



Figure 108. Andrea Mantegna, *The Virgin and Child*, ca. 1500. Engraving. London, The British Museum.



Figure 109. Ferdinand Bol, *The Holy Family in a Room*, ca. 1645. Etching, H. 4. Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Museum of Art.



Figure 110. Pieter de Hooch, *A Woman with Children in an Interior*, ca. 1658-60. Oil on canvas. San Francisco, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, California Palace of the Legion of Honor.





Figure 111. Emanuel de Witte, *Holy Family by Candlelight*, 1650. Oil on panel. Collection of Marei von Saher.



Figure 112. Pieter Cornelisz van Slingelandt, *The Carpenter's Family*, ca. 1665. Oil on panel. London, Collection of Her Majesty the Queen.



Figure 113. Frontispiece from Willem Sluiter, *Lof der Heilige Maagt Maria, en de triompherende Christus, over sijne verrijfenis en hemel-vaert* (In Praise of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and the Triumphal Christ, about his Resurrection and Ascension) (Amsterdam, 1681). Engraving. Amsterdam, Universiteits-Bibliotheek Amsterdam.



Figure 114. After Hendrick Goltzius, *The Holy Family*, from Willem Sluiter, *W. Sluiter's Lof der Heilige Maagt Maria en Triomferende Christus* (W. Sluiter's In Praise of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and the Triumphal Christ) (Amsterdam, 1687). Engraving. Amsterdam, Universiteits-Bibliotheek Amsterdam.





Figure 115. Hendrick Goltzius or his studio, *Rest on the Flight into Egypt*, ca. 1587-91. Engraving. Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet.



Figure 116. Hendrick Goltzius, *The Holy Family Under the Cherry Tree*, 1589. Engraving, H. 18. Leiden, Universiteitsbibliotheek Leiden, Prentenkabinet.



Figure 117. Jacob Matham after Hendrick Goltzius, *The Holy Family on the Flight into Egypt*, 1589. Engraving, H. 120. Leiden, Universiteitsbibliotheek Leiden, Prentenkabinet.



Figure 118. Jacob Matham after Hendrick Goltzius, *The Holy Family on the Flight into Egypt*, 1589. Engraving, H. 121. Leiden, Universiteitsbibliotheek Leiden, Prentenkabinet.



Figure 119. *Ruins of the Chapel of Our Lady of Need*, ca. 1637-1700. Hand-colored etching with engraving. Utrecht, Museum Catharijneconvent.





Figure 120. Gerrit Pietersz de Jongh, *Family on a Pilgrimage at the Ruins of the Chapel of Our Lady of Need*, 1630. Oil on panel. Utrecht, Museum Catharijneconvent.

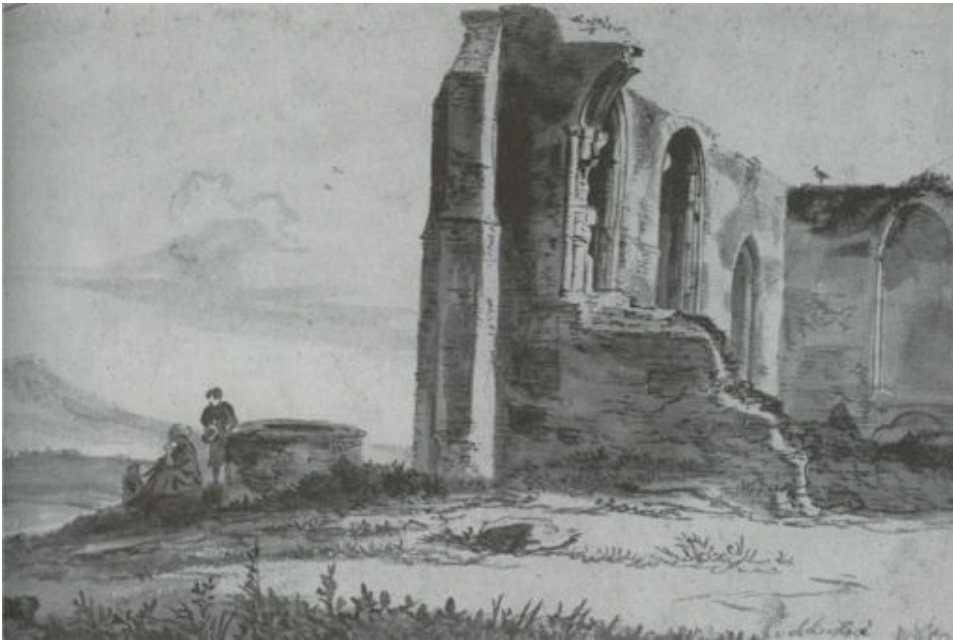


Figure 121. *Ruins of the Chapel of Our Lady of Need*. Gray and brown ink with pencil on paper. Alkmaar, Regionaal Archief.



Figure 122. S. van Baseroy, *Ruins of the Chapel of Our Lady of Need*. Watercolor and ink on parchment. Utrecht, Museum Catharijneconvent.



Figure 123. *Ruins of the Chapel of Our Lady of Need*, ca. 1637-1700. Etching with engraving. Alkmaar, Regionaal Archief.





Figure 124. *Ruins of the Chapel of Our Lady of Need*, ca. 1637-1700. Etching with engraving. Heiloo, Historische Vereniging Oud Heiloo.



Figure 125. *Ruins of the Chapel of Our Lady of Need*, detail, ca. 1637-1700. Hand-colored etching with engraving. Utrecht, Museum Catharijneconvent.



Figure 126. *Ruins of the Chapel of Our Lady of Need*, detail, ca. 1637-1700. Etching with engraving. Heiloo, Historische Vereniging Oud Heiloo.



Figure 127. *Ruins of the Chapel of Our Lady of Need*, detail, ca. 1637-1700. Etching with engraving. Alkmaar, Regionaal Archief.





Figure 128. Isabella Hertsens, *Ruins of the Chapel of Our Lady of Need*, ca. 1750. Engraving. Alkmaar, Regionaal Archief.



Figure 129. Jan Goeree, *Saint Willibrord and the Ruins of the Chapel of Our Lady of Need*, from Jacob van Royen, *Antiquitates Belgicae of Nederlandsche Oudtheden* (Amsterdam, 1700). Etching. Leiden, Universiteit Leiden, Prentenkabinet.





Figure 130. *Ruins of the Chapel of Our Lady of Need*. Oil on panel. Utrecht, Museum Catharijneconvent.



Figure 131. *Ruins of the Chapel of Our Lady of Need*, after 1713. Hand-colored engraving. Utrecht, Museum Catharijneconvent.





Figure 134. Adriaan Schoonebeek, *Amsterdam Beguine*, from Adriaan Schoonebeek, *Nette afbeeldingen der eyge dragten van alle geestelyke orders* (Amsterdam, 1691). Engraving. Nijmegen, Universiteitsbibliotheek.



Figure 135. Gerard ter Borch, *Procession with Flagellants*, ca. 1636-40. Oil on panel. Rotterdam, Museum Boijmans van Beuningen.





Figure 136. 't Hyló-er Ryskaartje (Map of Heiloo), 1704. Engraving. Alkmaar, Regionaal Archief.



Figure 137. Frederik Bouttats, *Mary of Kevelaer*, ca. 1640-76. Hand-colored engraving. Utrecht, Museum Catharijneconvent.



Figure 138. Peter Clouwet, *De Vrouwe Sterre der Zee*, 1697. Engraving. Utrecht, Museum Catharijneconvent.



Figure 139. Frontispiece from Justus Lipsius, *Diva Virgo Hallensis* (Antverpiae [Antwerp], 1605). Dayton, Ohio, Rare Book Collection of The Marian Library, University of Dayton.



Figure 140. *S. Maria, Montis Acvti*, from *Kort begryp der mirakelen, gratien, en de wonderheden, gheschiedt door de voorsprake van de glorieuse Moeder Godts Maria, gheviert binnen Scherpenheuvel, Stadt des Hertoghdoms van Brabandt* (Brussel [Brussels], 1679). Engraving. Dayton, Ohio, Rare Book Collection of The Marian Library, University of Dayton.

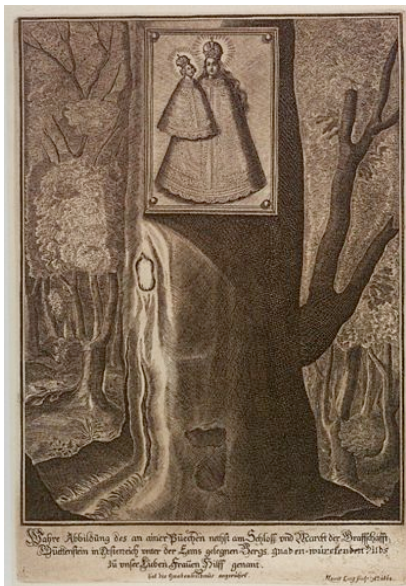


Figure 141. Maurit Lang, *Devotional picture for the Monastery of Mariahilfberg in Gutenstein, Austria*, 1668. Engraving. Stift Göttweig, Graphische Sammlung.





Figure 142. *The Virgin of Rocamadour*, from Wilhelm Gumpenberg, *Atlas Marianus sive de imaginibus deiparae per orbem christianum miraculosis* (Ingolstadt, 1657). Woodcut. London, University of London, The Warburg Institute.



Figure 143. *The Virgin of Guadalupe*, from Wilhelm Gumpenberg, *Atlas Marianus sive de imaginibus deiparae per orbem christianum miraculosis* (Ingolstadt, 1657). Woodcut. London, University of London, The Warburg Institute.



Figure 144. Diego Velázquez, *Immaculate Conception*, ca. 1618. Oil on canvas. London, National Gallery of Art.



Figure 145. G. Collaert, *The Immaculate Conception*. Hand-colored engraving. Utrecht, Museum Catharijneconvent.





Figure 146. *Refugium Peccatorum*, seventeenth century. Hand-colored engraving. Utrecht, Museum Catharijneconvent.



Figure 147. *Refugium Peccatorum*, ca. 1775. Hand-colored engraving with textile fragments. Utrecht, Museum Catharijneconvent.



Figure 148. Jan van Eyck, *Madonna in the Church*, ca. 1438-40. Oil on panel. Berlin, Gemäldegalerie, Staatliche Museen.



Figure 149. Bartolomé Esteban Murillo, *Immaculate Conception*, 1665-70. Oil on canvas. Madrid, Museo del Prado.



Figure 150. *Mary with Child Surrounded by the "Laudes Marianae" Triptych* (open), ca. 1615. Oil on panel. Utrecht, Museum Catharijneconvent.



Figure 151. *Mary with Child Surrounded by the "Laudes Marianae" Triptych* (closed), ca. 1615. Oil on panel. Utrecht, Museum Catharijneconvent.



Figure 152. Rembrandt, *Death of the Virgin*, 1639. Etching and drypoint, B. 99. Washington, DC, The National Gallery of Art.





Figure 153. Rembrandt, *Scholar Reading*, 1631. Oil on canvas. Stockholm, Nationalmuseum.



Figure 154. Rembrandt, *Jan Six*, 1647. Etching, drypoint and burin, B. 285. London, British Museum.

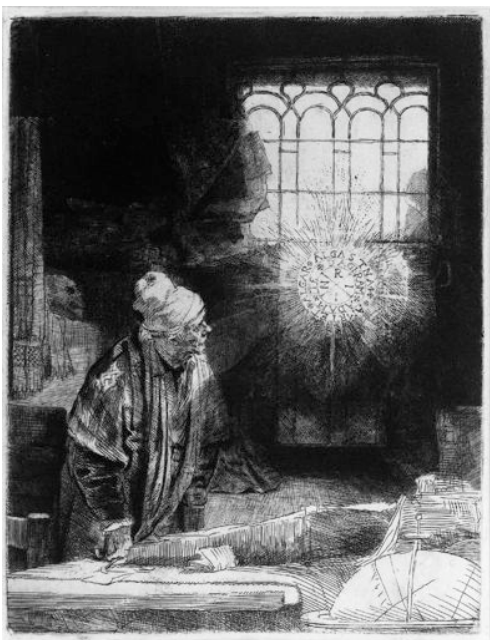


Figure 155. Rembrandt, *A Scholar in his Study ("Faust")*, ca. 1652. Etching, engraving, drypoint and burin, B. 270. Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet.



Figure 156. Anonymous, German School of Peter Maler or Ulm, *Death of the Virgin*, ca. 1465-70. Hand-colored woodcut. Washington, DC, The National Gallery of Art.



Figure 157. Hugo van der Goes, *Death of the Virgin*, ca. 1480. Oil on panel. Bruges, Groeninge Museum.



Figure 158. Theodor Galle and Carel de Mallery, *Death of the Virgin*, from *Officium Beatae Mariae Virginis, Nuper reformatum, & Pii V. Pontificis Maximi iussu editum: Ad instar Breviarii Romani sub Urbano VIII. recogniti* (Antwerp, 1652). Engraving. Dayton, Ohio, Rare Book Collection of The Marian Library, University of Dayton.





Figure 159. Jan Sadeler after Maarten de Vos, *Death of the Virgin*, 1576. Engraving, H. 719. Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale Albert Ier.



Figure 160. Theodor Galle and Carel de Mallery, *Burial of the Virgin*, from *Officium Beatae Mariae Virginis, Nuper reformatum, & Pii V. Pontificis Maximi iussu editum: Ad instar Breviarii Romani sub Urbano VIII. recogniti* (Antwerp, 1652). Engraving. Dayton, Ohio, Rare Book Collection of The Marian Library, University of Dayton.





Figure 161. Theodor Galle and Carel de Mallery, *Assumption of the Virgin*, from *Officium Beatae Mariae Virginis, Nuper reformatum, & Pii V. Pontificis Maximi iussu editum: Ad instar Breviarii Romani sub Urbano VIII. recogniti* (Antwerp, 1652). Engraving. Dayton, Ohio, Rare Book Collection of The Marian Library, University of Dayton.



Figure 162. *Bishop Gisbert Masius between Christ and the Virgin Mary*, from Gerardus Livius, *Bericht van de behoorlijcke ende onbehoorlijcke eere der ghelucksaligher Maghet Maria. Weerde moeder onses Heeren Iesu Christi*. (Nijmegen, 1612). Etching. Amsterdam, Universiteits-Bibliotheek Amsterdam.



Figure 163. Jan Goeree, *Saint Willibrord and the Ruins of the Chapel of Our Lady of Need*, from Jacob van Royen, *Antiquitates Belgicae of Nederlandsche Oudtheden* (Amsterdam, 1700). Etching. Leiden, Universiteit Leiden, Prentenkabinet.



Figure 164. Theodor Matham, *The first rule for dying well, which is that one who desires to die well should live well*, from Roberti Francesco Romolo Bellarmino, *De arte bene moriendi. Libri duo.* (Amsterdam, 1626). Etching. Boston, Special Collections, John J. Burns Library, Boston College.



Figure 165. Theodor Matham, *The Art of Dying Well As Death Draws Near*, from Roberti Francesco Romolo Bellarmino, *De arte bene moriendi. Libri duo.* (Amsterdam, 1626). Etching. Boston, Special Collections, John J. Burns Library, Boston College.



Figure 166. *The Fifth Sacrament: Extreme Unction*, from Josse Andries, *Heylighe weke ter eeren van de Alderheylichste Maeghet ende Moeder Godts Maria* (Antwerp, 1673), 114. Woodcut. Dayton, Ohio, Rare Book Collection of The Marian Library, University of Dayton.



Figure 167. Theodor Galle after Maarten van Heemskerck, *Man Receiving Extreme Unction*, late sixteenth century. Engraving. Leiden, Universiteit Leiden Prentenkabinet.



Figure 168. Hieronymus Wierix, *Transitus Matris Dei* (Death of the Mother of God), from Hieronymus Nadal, *Adnotationes et meditationes in Evangelia* (Antwerp, 1594). Engraving. Dayton, Ohio, Rare Book Collection of The Marian Library, University of Dayton.





Figure 169. Rembrandt, *Death Appearing to a Wedded Couple*, 1639. Etching and drypoint, B. 109. Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet.



Figure 170. Rembrandt, *Saskia in Bed*, ca. 1639. Pen and brown ink with brown wash on paper. Oxford, Ashmolean Museum.



Figure 171. Rembrandt, *Sheet of Studies with Figures and Saskia in Bed*, ca. 1639. Etching, B. 369. Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet.



Figure 172. Albrecht Dürer, *Death of the Virgin*, 1510, from the series the *Life of the Virgin*, 1502-11. Woodcut. Washington, DC, National Gallery of Art.



Figure 173. Albrecht Dürer, *The Birth of the Virgin*, 1503, from the series the *Life of the Virgin*, 1502-11. Woodcut, B. 80. Munich, Staatliche Graphische Sammlung.



Figure 174. Rembrandt, *The Angel Appearing to the Shepherds*, 1634. Etching, drypoint and burin, B. 44. Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet.





Figure 175. Titian, *Assumption of the Virgin*, 1516-18. Oil on panel. Venice, Santa Maria Gloriosa dei Frari.



Figure 176. Dirck Pietersz Crabeth, *Death of the Virgin Mary*, ca. 1561-65. Brown ink and brown, gray and red wash on paper. Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet.





Figure 177. Raphael, *Portrait of Baldassare Castiglione*, ca. 1514-15. Oil on canvas. Paris, Musée du Louvre.



Figure 178. Rembrandt, after Raphael, *Baldassare Castiglione*, 1639. Pen and brown ink, touched with white, on paper prepared in brown. Vienna, Graphische Sammlung Albertina.



Figure 179. Rembrandt, *Self-Portrait Leaning on a Stone Sill*, 1639. Etching, B. 21. London, British Museum.



Figure 180. Titian, *A Man with a Quilted Sleeve* (*Ludovico Ariosto?*), ca. 1510. Oil on canvas. London, National Gallery of Art.



Figure 181. Pieter Bruegel, *Death of the Virgin*, ca. 1564. Grisaille panel. Banbury, Upton House.



Figure 182. Philips Galle after Pieter Bruegel, *Death of the Virgin*, 1574. Engraving, H. 116. Rotterdam, Museum Boijmans van Beuningen.





Figure 183. Federico Zuccaro, *Death of the Virgin*, ca. 1589. Pen and ink and wash on paper. London, British Museum.



Figure 184. Caravaggio, *Death of the Virgin*, 1606. Oil on canvas. Paris, Musée du Louvre.



Figure 185. Copy after Cornelis Cort after Federico Zuccaro, published by Jan Sadeler, *Death of the Virgin*, after 1567. Engraving, H. 97b. Munich, Staatliche Graphische Sammlungen.



Figure 186. Peter Paul Rubens, *Assumption of the Virgin*, 1626. Oil on panel. Antwerp, Onze-Lieve-Vrouwekathedraal.



Figure 187. Jan de Swart, *Birth of John the Baptist*, from the series the *Life of John the Baptist*, ca. 1534-58. Etching. Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet.



Figure 188. Jacques de Gheyn II, *A Gentleman Standing by the Deathbed of a Lady*, 1601. Miniature in colors and gold on vellum. London, British Museum.



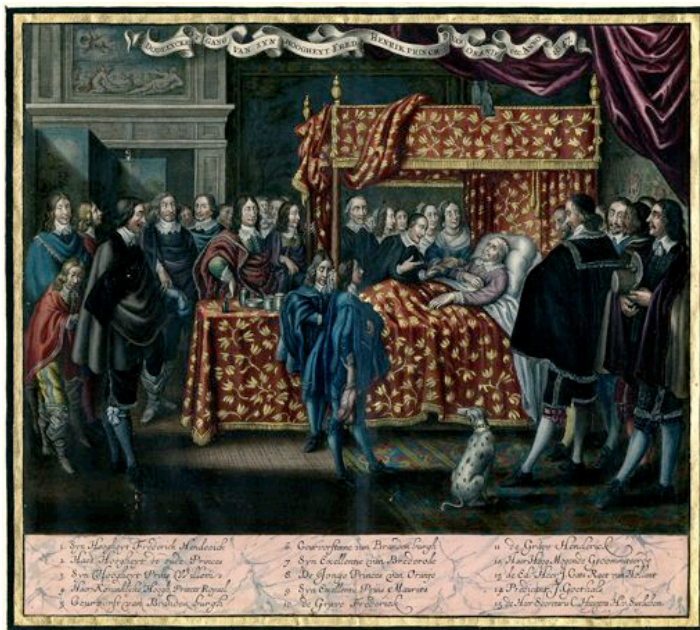


Figure 189. Cornelis van Dalen I after Adriaen Pietersz van de Venne, *Dodelycke Uytgang van Syn Hoogheyt Fred. Hendrik Prince van Oranje-Nassau* (Funeral Procession of His Highness Frederik Hendrik, Prince of Orange-Nassau), from Pieter Post, *Begraeffnisse van syne hoogheyt Frederick Henrick* (Funeral of His Highness Frederik Hendrik) (Amsterdam, 1651). Hand-colored etching. Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet.



Figure 190. Rembrandt, *Death of Jacob*, undated. Ink and wash on paper. Location unknown.



Figure 191. Rembrandt, *The Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Nicolaes Tulp*, 1632. Oil on canvas. The Hague, Mauritshuis.



Figure 192. Rembrandt, *The Raising of Lazarus: Larger Plate*, ca. 1632. Etching and burin, B. 73. London, British Museum.



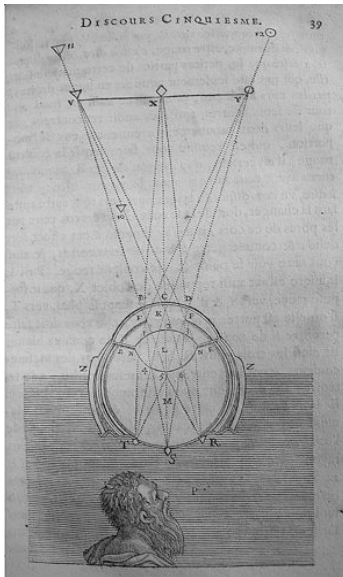


Figure 193. Frans van Schooten, *Illustration of the Retinal Projection Theory*, from René Descartes, "La Dioptrique," in *Discours de la methode pour bien conduire sa raison, & chercher la verité dans les sciences. Plus La dioptrique. Les meteores. et La geometrie. Qui sont des essais de cete Methode* (Leiden, 1637), 39. Engraving. Amsterdam, Universiteits-Bibliotheek Amsterdam.



Figure 194. Frans van Schooten, *Illustration of a Blind Man Using Sticks to See*, from René Descartes, "La Dioptrique," in *Discours de la methode pour bien conduire sa raison, & chercher la verité dans les sciences. Plus La dioptrique. Les meteores. et La geometrie. Qui sont des essais de cete Methode* (Leiden, 1637). Engraving. Amsterdam, Universiteits-Bibliotheek Amsterdam.



Figure 195. Rembrandt, *The Three Trees*, 1643. Etching, B. 212. Washington, DC, Library of Congress.

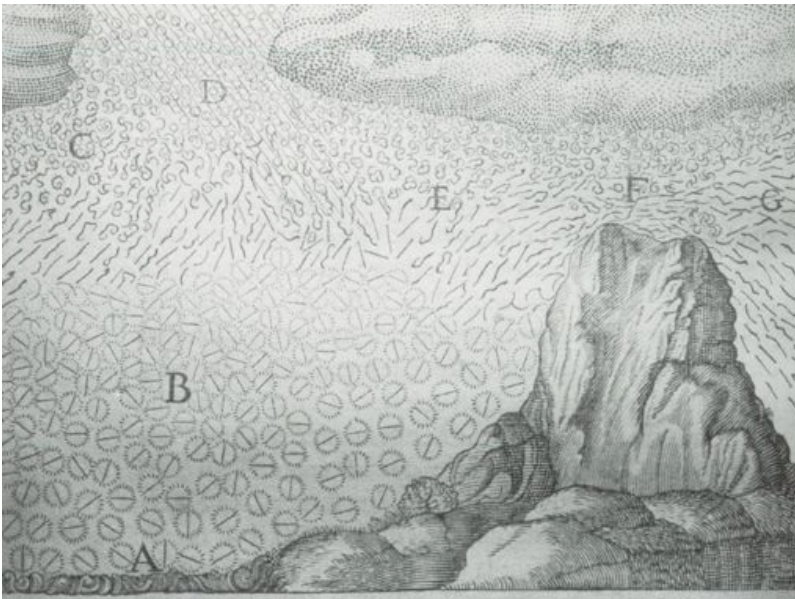


Figure 196. Frans van Schooten, *Illustration of Cloud Formation*, from René Descartes, "Les météores," in *Discours de la methode pour bien conduire sa raison, & chercher la verité dans les sciences. Plus La dioptrique. Les meteores. et La geometrie. Qui sont des essais de cete Methode* (Leiden, 1637). Engraving. Private collection.



Figure 197. Lucas van Leyden, *The Dentist*, 1523. Engraving. Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet.



Figure 198. Gerrit van Honthorst, *The Dentist*, 1622. Oil on canvas. Dresden, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen.





Figure 199. Gerrit van Honthorst, *The Toothpuller*, 1622. Oil on canvas. Dresden, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen.



Figure 200. Frans van Mieris, *The Doctor's Visit*, 1657. Oil on canvas. Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum.



Figure 201. Constantijn Daniel van Renesse, *The Quack*, 1651. Etching with drypoint in the second state, H. 4. London, British Museum.



Figure 202. Jacob Toorenvliet, *A Surgeon Binding up a Woman's Arm after Bloodletting*, 1666. Oil on canvas. London, Wellcome Library.



Figure 203. Adriaen van der Werff, *Flight into Egypt*, 1710. Oil on panel. The Hague, Mauritshuis.